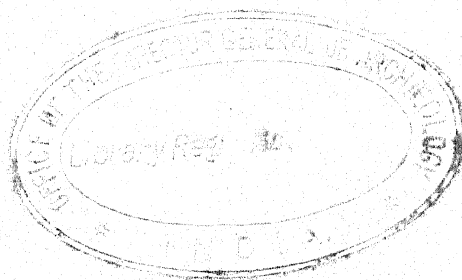
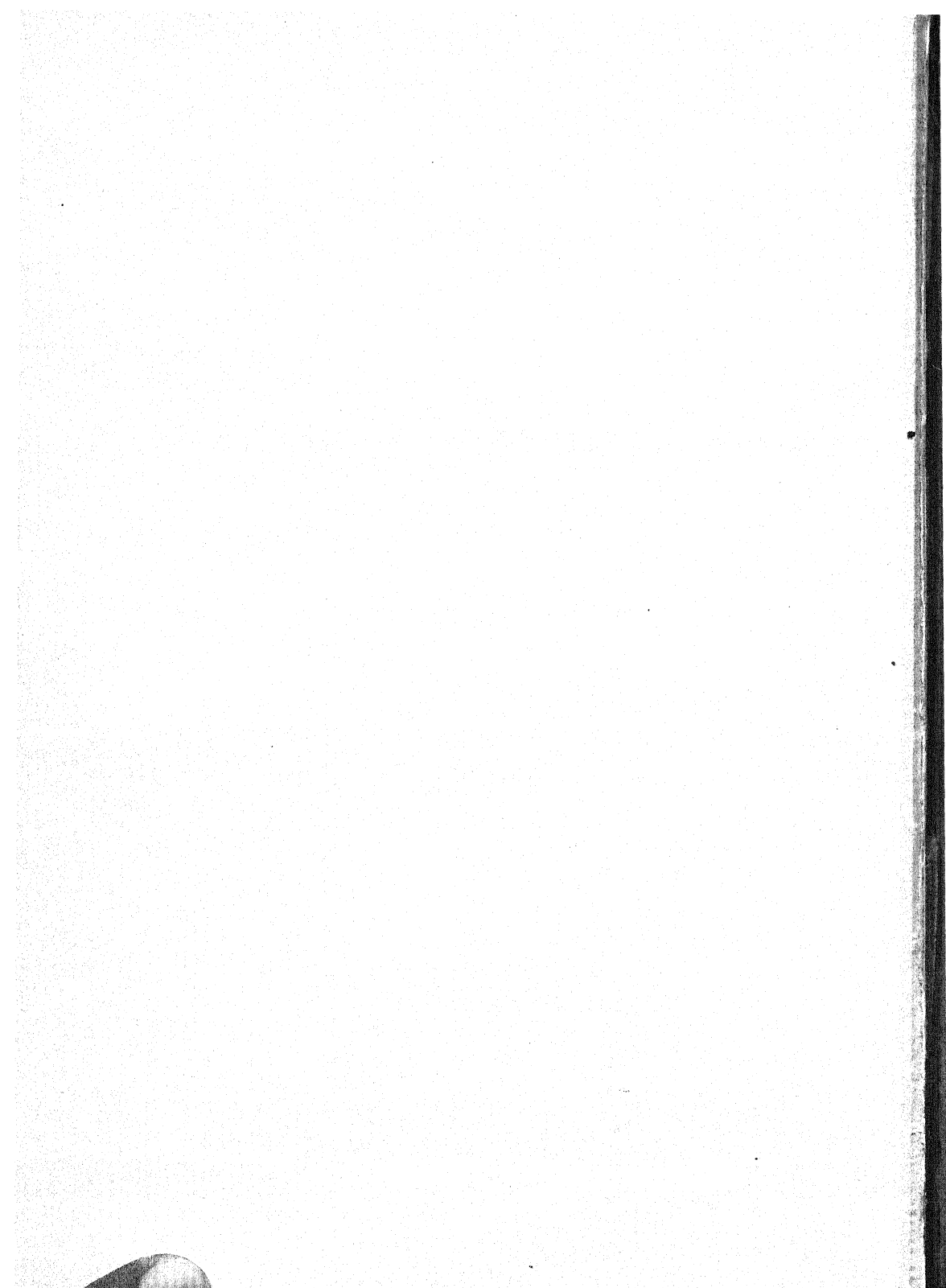


THE CHILDHOOD OF ART





THE CHILDHOOD OF ART

OR

THE ASCENT OF MAN

A SKETCH OF THE VICISSITUDES OF HIS UPWARD
STRUGGLE, BASED CHIEFLY ON THE RELICS
OF HIS ARTISTIC WORK IN PRE-
HISTORIC TIMES

BY

HERBERT GREEN SPEARING, M.A.

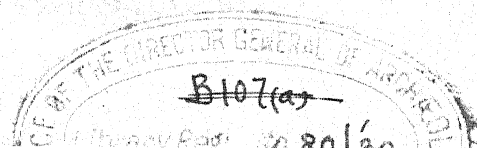
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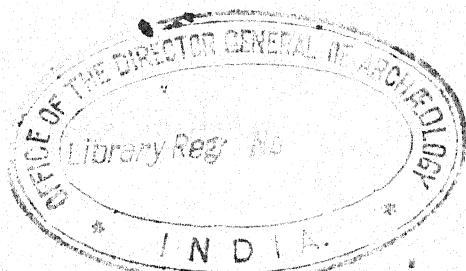
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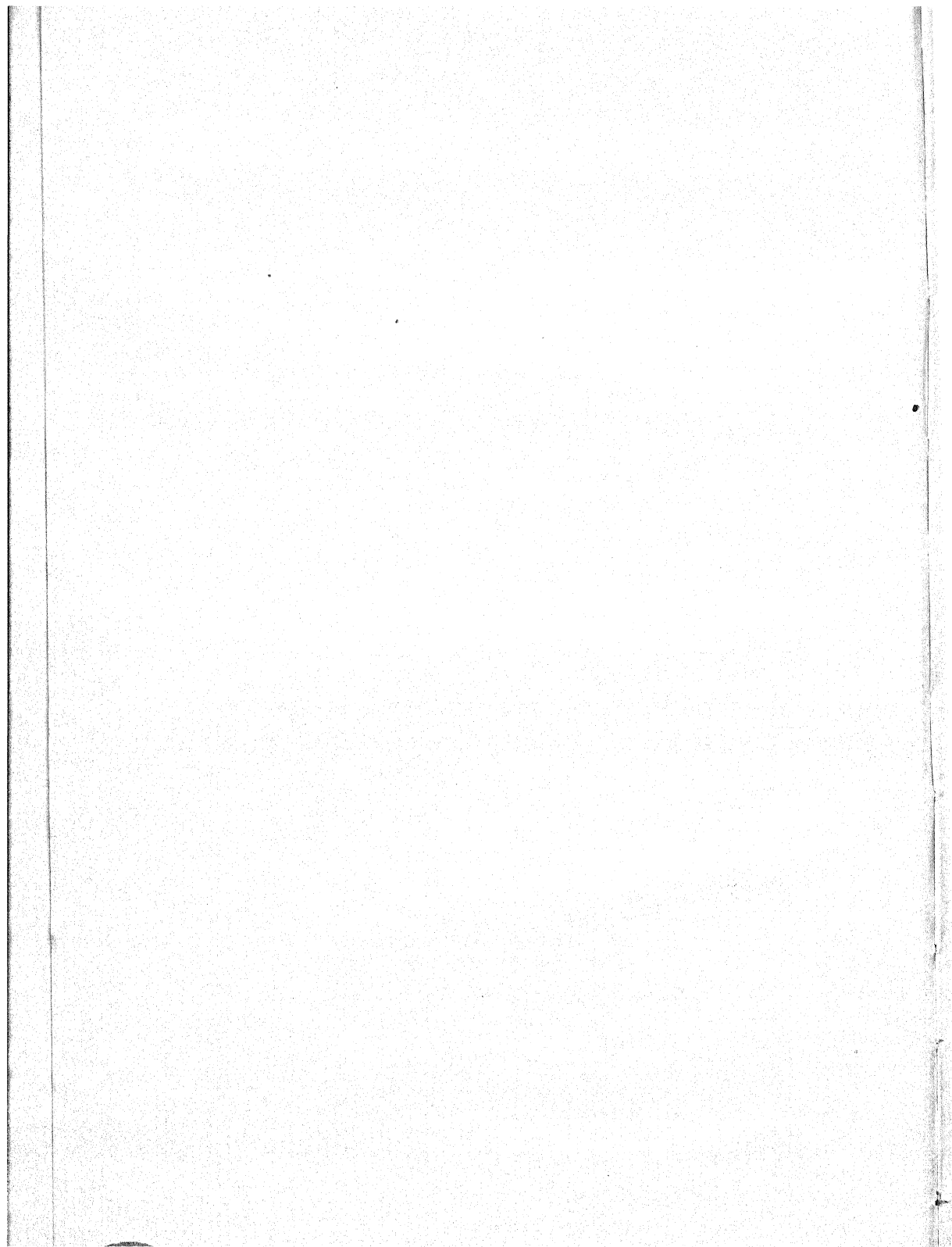
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THE CHILDHOOD OF ART

CHAPTER X

THE EARLIEST CHALDEAN ART

WE have seen that Egyptian art reached its highest level after being crossed with a foreign strain, the origin of which is still obscure. Many of its characteristics are so similar to those of the early art of Chaldea that archæologists were for a time rather inclined to consider it as an offshoot of the Chaldean, or at all events as having been very strongly influenced by it.

At present the tendency seems to be towards believing that their similarities were due to ideas derived from a common ancestral race, possibly Semitic Arabian, of which we have as yet no satisfactory traces.

Recent researches have shown that these ideas did not form the basis of Chaldean art. They only caused modification in a well-developed style which was chiefly attributable to the genius of an ancient local race. These people (in later times called Sumerians) had reached a fairly high stage of civilisation long before their independence was threatened by outsiders. This discovery was very disconcerting to literary historians and philologists, for that race was proved to be—not a branch of the civilising Aryans

nor of the gifted Semitics, but of a negroid people having affinities with the Mongols. They used an agglutinative language—a form midway between the monosyllabic languages like Chinese and the inflected systems used by the Indo-European and the Semitic group.

These results were not obtained by men sitting comfortably in libraries and building up theories without observing facts, using bricks made without straw, those little straws of well-recorded observations that seem so insignificant and are so difficult to gather. Lives were risked and lives were lost in collecting the material for the scientific study of these long forgotten races. An abridgment of the story can be found in Professor Sayce's *Archæology of the Cuneiform Inscriptions* (S.P.C.K. 1907), but of course that book is chiefly devoted to the literary or linguistic side of the question.

The conclusions arrived at scandalised the philological world, which, as Professor Sayce says, "was comfortably convinced that none but a Semitic or Aryan people could have been the originators of civilisation," and was "little able to understand what is meant by scientific evidence."

Thanks to the energy and liberality of the French and also, though to a less extent, of the Germans and of the Americans, still deeper layers have now been opened out, and abundant evidence has been found of the civilisation of the race that used those mysterious hieroglyphic characters from which the

cuneiform characters were afterwards developed. Elaborate and well-illustrated reports are published by the French Government every few years, and students have access at the Louvre to a good selection of characteristic specimens. Explorations in Persia were begun in 1897, and have been carried on whenever the unsettled state of the country did not render the work too dangerous.³⁶ Twelve quarto volumes called *Mémoires de la délégation en Perse* have been issued; the thirteenth is now in the press. M. J. de Morgan, the chief of the expedition, has kindly allowed me to read the proof sheets of this last volume and to use some of the illustrations, but no extracts can give a proper idea of the importance of this latest contribution to the history of art.

The earliest relics of that strange Negro-Mongolian race do not come from Chaldea proper, but were dug up at Susa, the capital of the mountainous district called Elam (Western Persia). This country forms the eastern border of that great Babylonian plain, of which the southern part was occupied by the Chaldeans. These relics lay beneath some seventy feet of clay and sand that had been gradually piled up over them by the disintegration of successive structures built of unburnt bricks. All over Babylonia and Persia you can recognise the sites of hundreds of cities unknown and unexplored, raised far above the usual level by constant importations of fresh building material, just as London has risen above the marshes that once surrounded Tower Hill.

The lowest strata, reposing on a slight natural elevation, show that the founders of Susa had

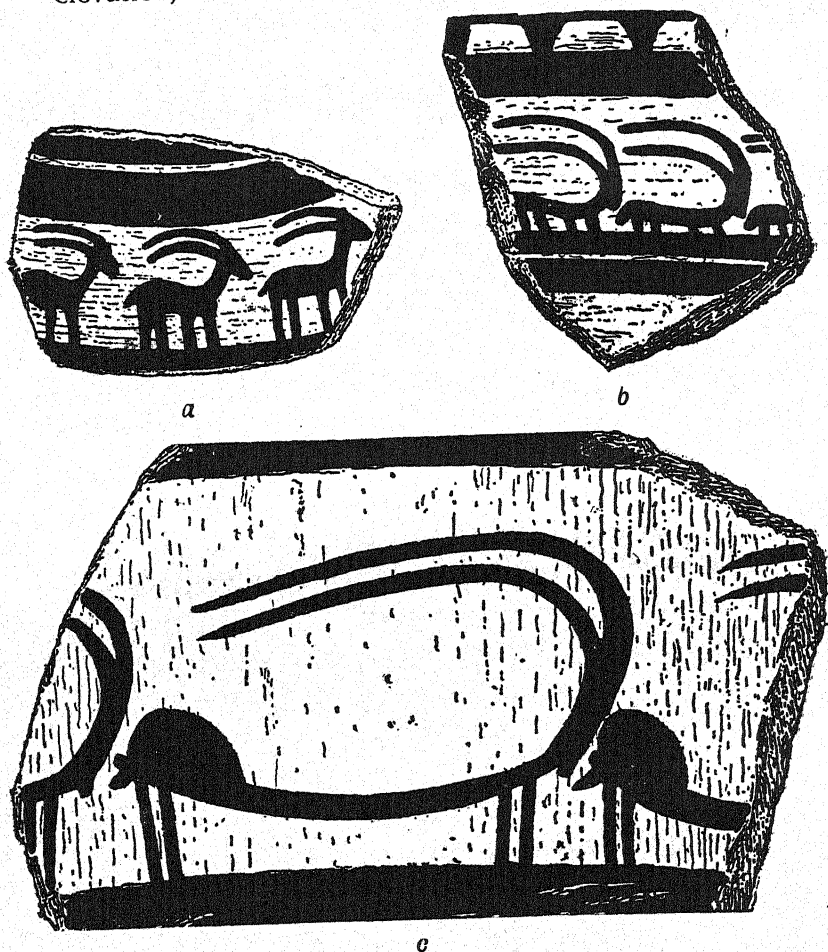


FIG. 201.—Modifications of the gazelle motive.

hardly passed out of the neolithic state. Copper was scarce, and stone was the only material generally

available for making knives or chisels or other cutting implements. Yet they had been civilised long enough for the decoration on their pottery to become so conventionalised that it is often difficult to trace the origins of their designs. Look at this cup (Fig. 201-f). Who



FIG. 201.—Modifications of the gazelle motive (*continued*); *a, b, c* are fragments (actual size) from the excavations near Moussian; *d, e, f* are about one-third of their actual size. They were found in the cemetery outside the walls of the earliest town at Susa—now seventy feet below the summit of the mound. Compare these rows of birds with those of Fig. 123.

would say at first sight that the middle figure represented a gazelle? It is seen in rather less stylised form on the other cup (Fig. 201-e), and still less conventionalised on the fragment (Fig. 201-d). On the fragments (Figs. 201-a, b, c) the transition stages are fairly recognisable, but no specimens have yet

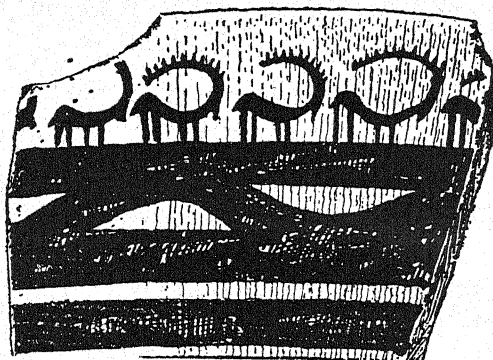
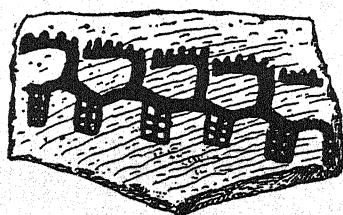
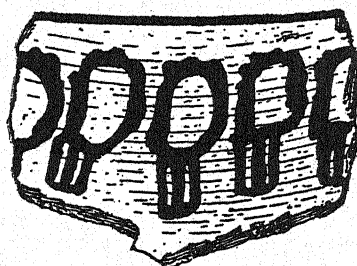
*a**b**c*

FIG. 202.—Modifications of the goat design.

been found to lead us back to its original and probably much more natural form.

Into what curious designs the goat form might pass is seen on these vase fragments (Fig. 202-*a*, *b*, *c*). In one case the bodies become joined to give a con-

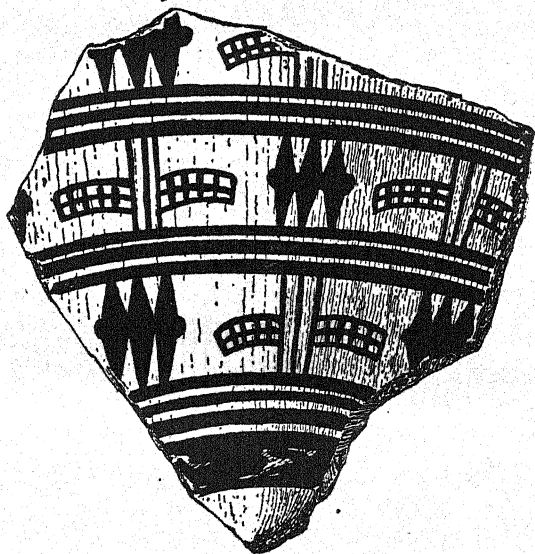


FIG. 203.—Designs supposed to represent stylised birds, degenerate forms of Fig. 204.

tinuous pattern; while in the other the horns join the body and form a circle propped by three legs. One might almost feel inclined to doubt that the last figure was really intended to represent a four-legged animal, but many other specimens have been found showing that the copyists were contented to give only three legs to a figure that still bore some resemblance to a quadruped. Another strange instance is seen in

Fig. 203. It does not look much like a bird, but Professor Breuil believes it to be a degenerate form of figure 204. The long-necked birds on the cups

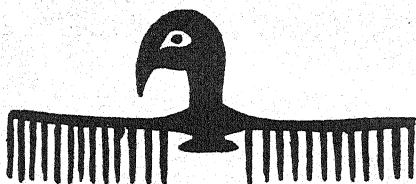


FIG. 204.—Compare this stylised bird with the more naturalistic bird in Fig. 220.

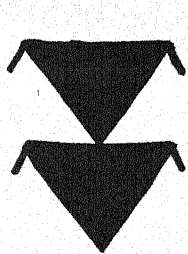
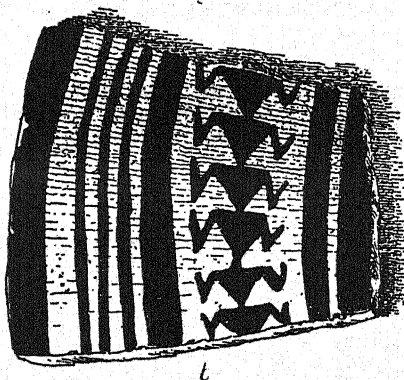
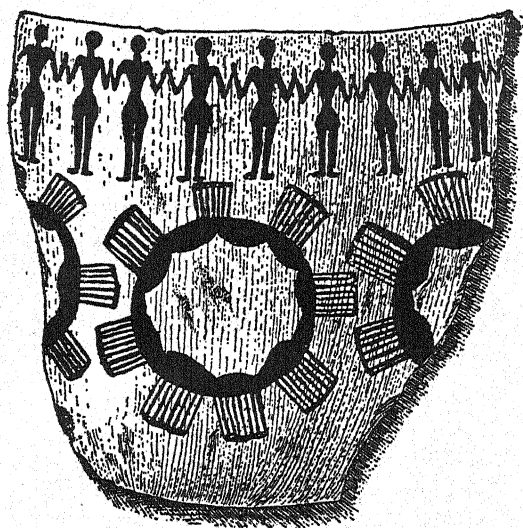
degenerated into rows of plain vertical straight lines by frequent copying; every step of that degeneration can be traced. Another bird rather like a wild duck seems to have been transformed into a Z (Fig. 205),



FIG. 205.—Modifications of the bird form, taken from various fragments of painted pottery.

resembling those Z's straggling in curious groups over old Egyptian vases (Fig. 120); but I have not heard of any such groups being found in Chaldea.

The most interesting and perhaps the most extraordinary are the human figures, which can be traced from the fairly naturalistic drawing A (Fig. 206) through the easily recognisable shape B, to the merely geometrical designs C and D, or to the simple zigzags E.



c



d



e

FIG. 206.—*a*, actual size; *b*, two-thirds actual size; *c*, *d*, *e*, taken from various fragments.

Other variations were made by placing two or three bodies side by side, giving them only one pair of arms

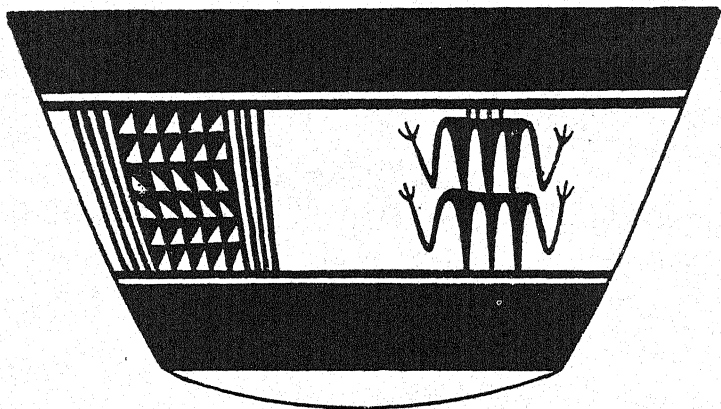


FIG. 207.—Bowl of yellow earthenware as thin and hard as porcelain. From the excavations in the mounds at Khazineh, near Moussian. Two-thirds actual size.

(Fig. 207). Then the arms disappeared and more bodies were added. Thus

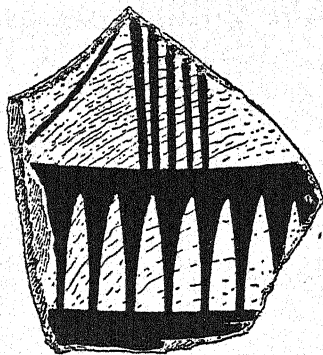


FIG. 208.—Fragment of similar ware from the same site.

we get the very common pattern seen on this fragment (Fig. 208), which would be quite unintelligible if we could not trace it from its original form.

The series of heads of oxen (Fig. 209) is curious, because the final result looks so much like a man's head and arms that even expert archæologists thought it must be a human form similar to those female figures

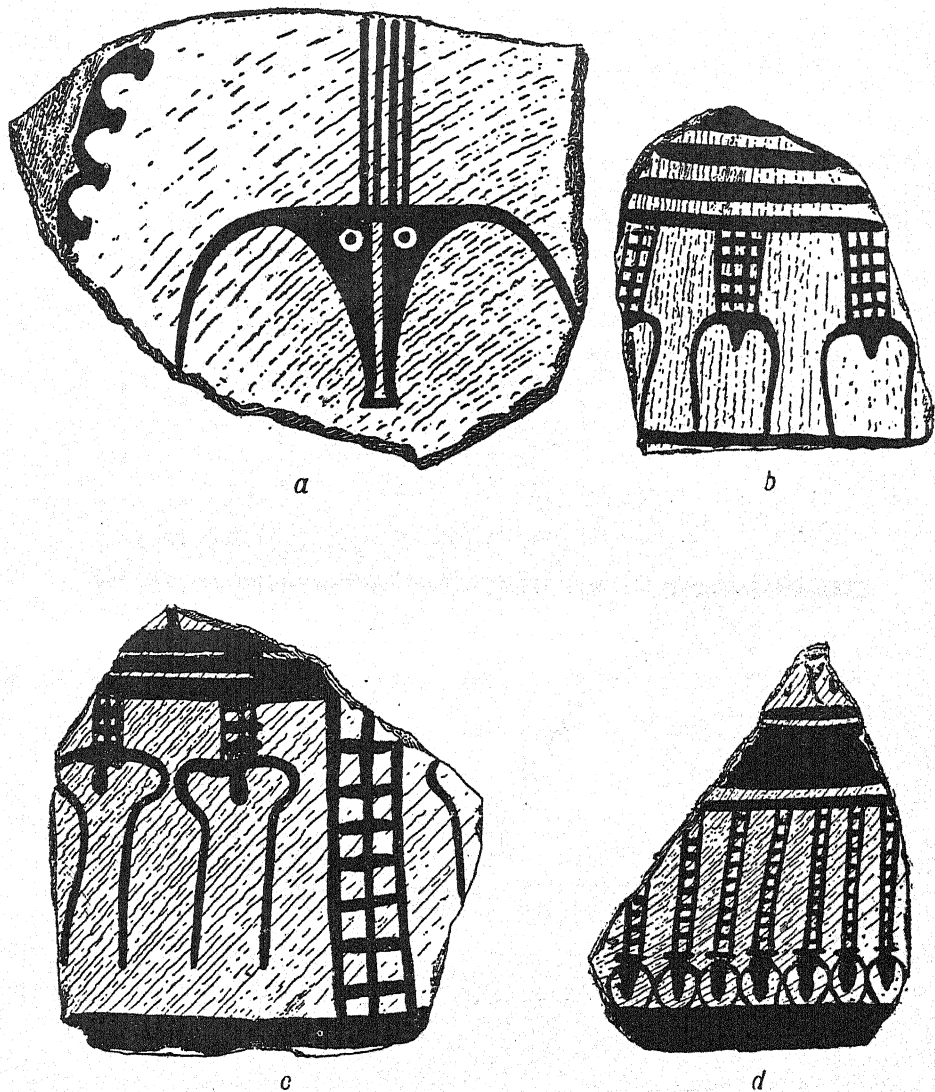


FIG. 209.—Modifications of bulls' heads and horns. Fragments from Moussian.
Actual size.

on Egyptian pottery (Fig. 120), until Abbé Breuil pointed out its derivation. There are some small frag-

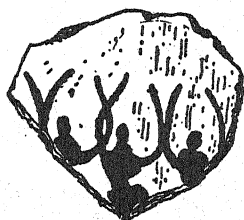


FIG. 210.—These figures may be intended for women. Compare with Fig. 120 and Fig. 372.

ments (Fig. 210) on which the figures really seem intended to represent women, but it is not safe to draw definite conclusions from a few imperfect specimens. We have previously remarked what strange modifications these bucrania may undergo (see Fig. 78). On a very fine vase from Khazineh, one of the many city

mounds near Susa, bulls' horns in a continuous chain form a very effective decoration (Fig. 211), more

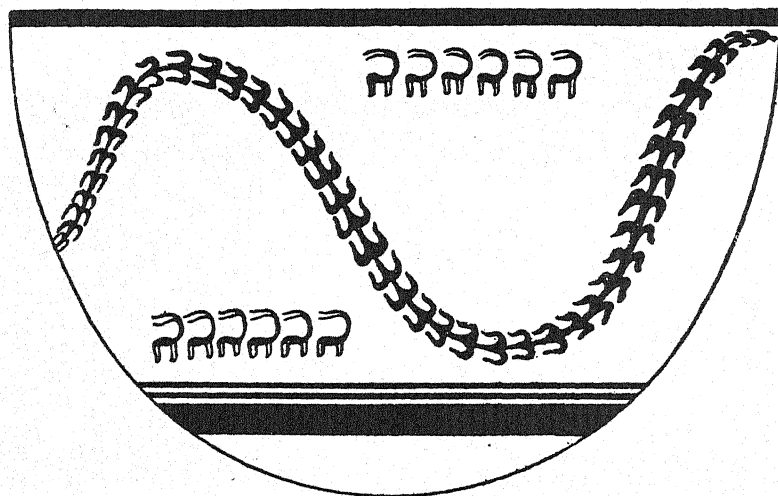
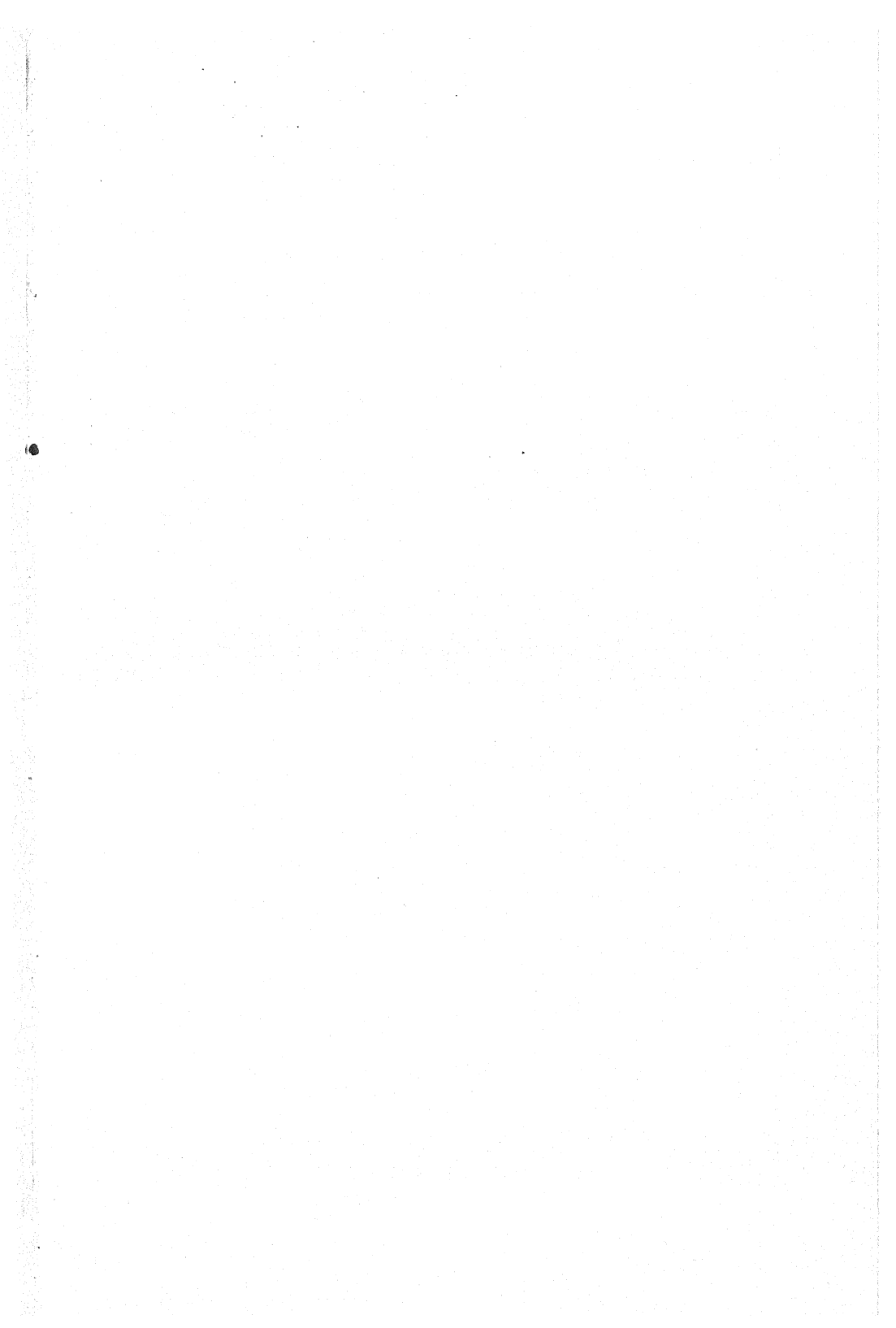
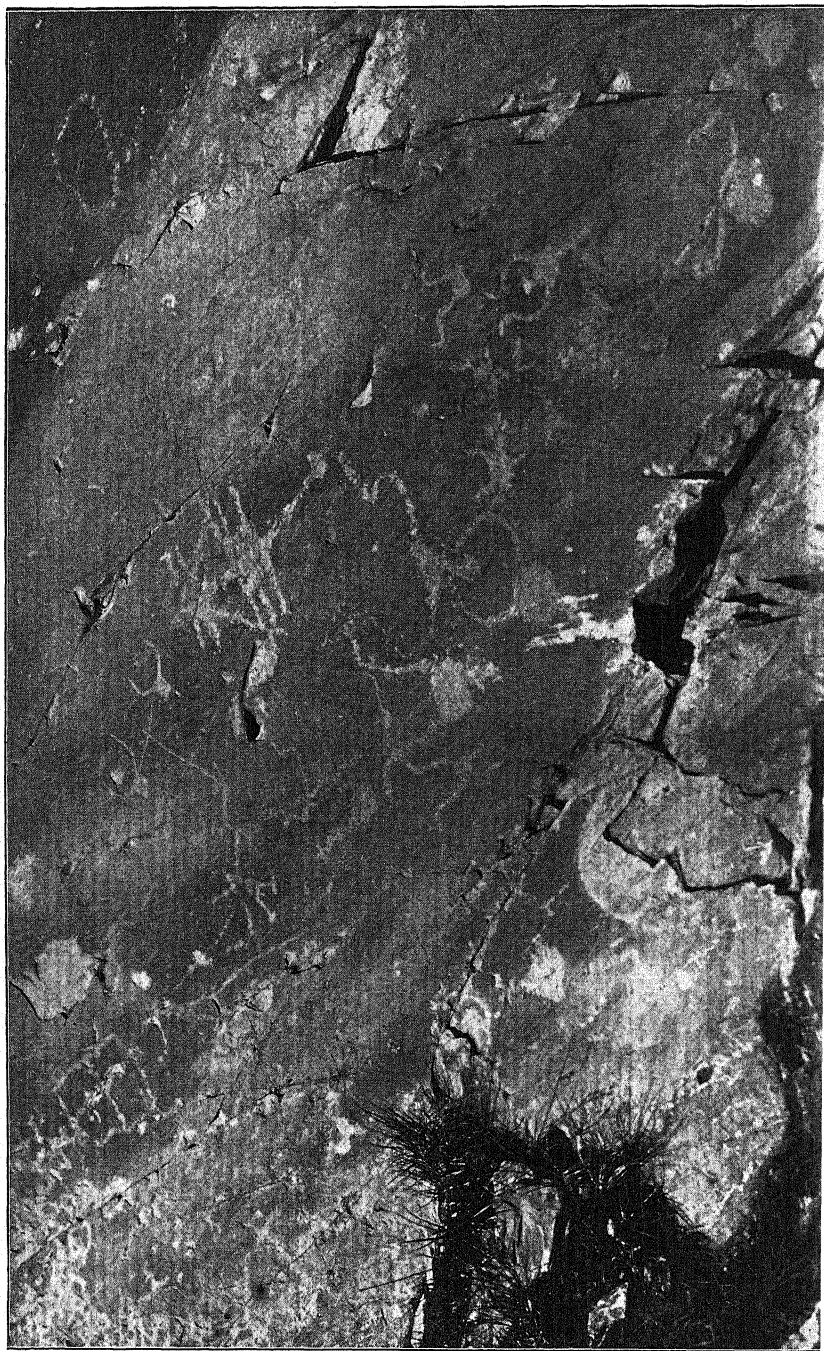


FIG. 211.—Bowl of hard thin yellowish earthenware from Khazineh, near Moussian. Half actual size. Compare the decoration with that on Fig. 284. All this thin pottery is considered by experts to have been turned on a pivotted wheel of slow rotation. See *Délégation en Perse*, xiii. p. 30.





To face p. 267

effective perhaps to charm our eyes than to charm away the evil spirits, whose imaginary existence has burdened the lives of countless generations having greater faith in devils than in God.

Those long horned figures are strangely similar to many of these innumerable incised drawings (Fig. 212) found high up in the mountains of the Maritime Alps near the Col di Tenda. They have been very carefully noted and described by Mr. C. Bicknell in his *Prehistoric Rock Engravings in the Italian Maritime Alps*. (Gibelli, Bordighera, 1911.) They are not easily recognisable, and if there had not been such a very great number of them they would probably never have been noticed. They afford good ground for hoping that other incised drawings will be found in Europe, when people have learned to keep their eyes open for such faint traces of man's ancient handiwork. They are covered with snow for a great part of the year; it is difficult to imagine why so many thousand large figures should have been laboriously pecked out on the smooth rocky slopes of such an inaccessible and barren district.

Archæologists have generally agreed in attributing them to the bronze age of North Italy, only about some three thousand years ago, or perhaps a little more; but no satisfactory explanation of their purpose has yet been given. It is possible that a sort of prehistoric Lama once held sway there over the wild pastoral tribes, and professed to protect their cattle and other possessions against harm by inscribing them

in his sacred book—upon payment of a fee, that main-spring in the performance of so many religious rites. There have always been men who will trade upon the hopes and fears of their credulous fellows, priding themselves too on the holiness of their rascally proceedings.

This class of men flourished exceedingly in Elam and in Chaldea. The animistic religion of those early races lent itself readily to the deceptions of wizards and soothsayers. That rich city of Eridu, close to the Biblical Ur of the Chaldees, owed its wealth to the trade in charms and incantations carried on by the priests of Ea, rather than to its traffic as a seaport town. Those busy streets once thronged by anxious seekers after good gifts from heaven, or by the greatly daring toilers of the sea, are now buried deep beneath accumulated refuse, the salt waves that lapped its quays now break upon a shore a hundred miles away. What a site for an enthusiastic excavator, yet it is almost untouched.

In later times the people of these regions called themselves Sumerians, but we have no means of knowing whether this name was used in those earlier days, for as yet no traces have been found of any sort of writing on the relics from the lower strata. Neither have any statuettes been found which might show what race they belonged to, but a very primitive figure of baked clay (Fig. 213) seems to prove that at least some of them had that same reverence for a female goddess which characterises all the "Mediterranean"

race. The few drawings of human figures on the pottery are so crude that we cannot glean much information from them (Fig. 214). They bear a striking resemblance to that Egyptian drawing on a red vase (Fig. 100), they are also very similar to the figures on Minoan pottery from Melos (Fig. 301), and on the Dipylon ware of Greece (Fig. 372), but we have already noticed that not much importance can be attached to the resemblances

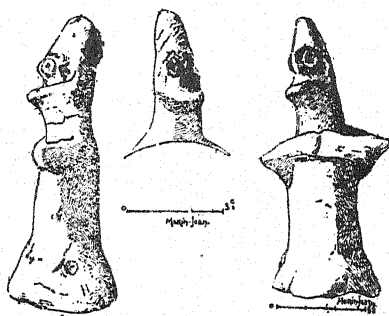


FIG. 213.—Terra cotta image from the earliest city at Susa. It has the usual attitude (holding the hands to the breast) of the ordinary figurines of later periods. It probably represents the same goddess, Nana. (Ishtar or Astarte). This supposition is strengthened by a painted clay figure of a dove found in the same deposits.

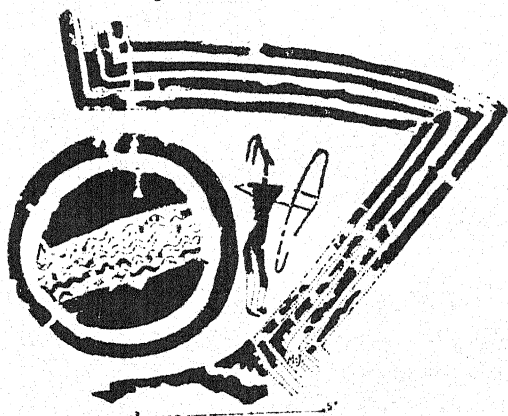


FIG. 214-a.—Fragment from cemetery of earliest city at Susa. The circle may be a still further degeneration of the gazelle design (Fig. 201).

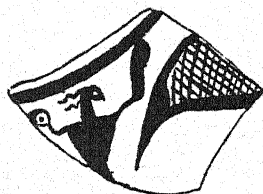


FIG. 214-b.—Fragment of painted pottery of the second period. Susa. Notice the hair, and the head shaped like a bird's (Fig. 373).

of comparatively simple forms. Another resemblance to Minoan pottery is to be seen in the vessel with a tubular spout (Fig. 213 *bis*), which is occasionally

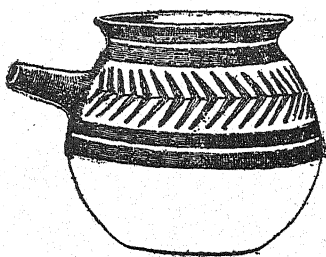


FIG. 213 *bis*.—Vase with tubular spout. From the cemetery of the first city at Susa.

found in the earliest deposits, and still more frequently in those of the second period. Although the cups and bowls were so well made, and of such good shape, no large vases have yet been found, only very small specimens with four perforated handles (Fig.

214 *bis*) rather like those of the earliest stone vases of Egypt (Fig. 94). In one of their methods for producing a design there is a curious similarity to the system of *traits réservés* adopted by the Ionians of Rhodes and Asia Minor several thousand years later, for the zigzag marks in Fig. 215 were formed by reserving a zigzag space when the colour was painted on the body of the vase. Perhaps the most surprising of all their designs is one showing

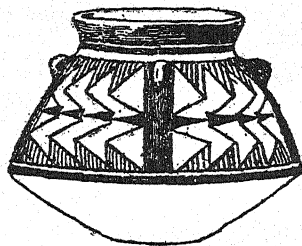


FIG. 214 *bis*.—Vase with perforated handles, probably for attaching the threads by which it was suspended. The design is peculiar and inexplicable.

a tree apparently laden with fruit, and having two birds standing at its foot (Fig. 215 *bis*). Among all the representations found on ancient vases, up to and

including the Greek period, this is almost the only drawing which shows any appreciation of the beauty of a tree and of its foliage.³⁷

Taking their work as a whole, it seems to prove that they were a people of simple habits, refined and cultured, but possessing little vigour and self-assertiveness. Their designs are well balanced and not overcrowded; indeed, we see no signs of that *horror vacui* which is often said to be characteristic of archaic work. I am inclined to think that the confused and crowded compositions found in certain periods are a sign of decadence rather than of archaism. It is a sign often observed when wealth and luxury are increasing, and when art is beginning to be paralysed



FIG. 215.—Vase with zigzag design made by *traits réservés*. From the cemetery at Susa. About four inches diameter. The four perforated handles are rather similar to those on the very earliest stone vases in Egypt (Fig. 94).

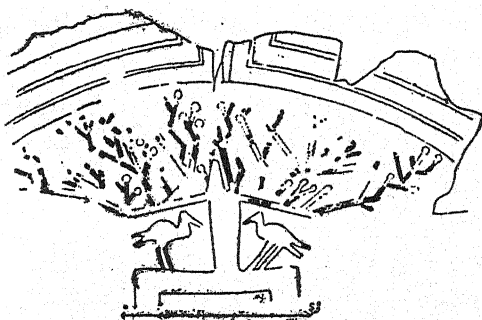


FIG. 215 bis.—Unique representation of a tree. Susa. Size about four inches.

by a desire for great display. A nation may pass through this stage triumphantly, issuing all the stronger for having resisted the deadening pressure of mere wealth, or it may succumb

crushed by the burden of the very weapon which should have served to guard its life from ills. The

inhabitants of Susa, and of the surrounding land of Elam, were soon to pass through this phase; later on we shall see how they survived it. They were already in some ways more civilised than the neolithic Egyptians; for besides practising weaving and metallurgy, they used and perhaps were the inventors of the potter's wheel.³⁸

The best specimens of their pottery were dug up from some great mounds about ninety miles from Susa, and not far from Moussian, a village in the lower ranges of the Elamite mountains, on the western borders of modern Persia. Most of the illustrations (Figs. 201 to 215) have been taken from these specimens. The ware is of a fine texture, thin and hard, ringing like porcelain, but not glazed. Its colour is generally light buff or pale yellow, the designs were drawn (before the ware was fired) with black or dark brown paint, though some vases are red and their ornamentation black. It is difficult to realise that they are the decadent products of a nation that had flourished and decayed while yet the great Sphinx of Egypt was still a shapeless mass of unhewn rock.

Shall we ever discover where that nation's art first blossomed and matured?

No stone carvings have yet been obtained from those lowest strata, but at Susa a few flat bits of limestone were found to have simple designs worked on them with a sort of wooden drill and wet sand (Fig. 216). These might be taken for the earliest specimens of the seal engraver's art, but it is diffi-

cult, and often impossible to determine the comparative age and use of the various relics from these strata. Neither crudeness nor excellence of execution can afford us any trustworthy criterion. We have seen that crude specimens may often be less ancient than those of far better workmanship; or they may be contemporaneous, and their inferiority may merely



FIG. 216.—Clay impression made by a hard white stone cylinder seal found at Tello. The workmanship is very similar to that of the designs on the pieces of limestone found at Susa.

be due to their having been produced in a different locality where art was not so well advanced, or they may have been made by inferior artists living in the same district. Also certain specimens may have been preserved for centuries in some temple or palace, finally to share a common burial with objects of much later date under the wreckage of some great catastrophe.

These are the ordinary and unavoidable difficulties that all archæologists have to contend with. There are many other difficulties when any special study,

such as of art, has to be pursued. Well-preserved relics are rare, and they are liable to swift decay soon after their discovery. The illustrations of them in the old standard works are not to be relied upon, especially with regard to points that were not considered important when they were published. The accounts of new discoveries are scattered in the journals and reports of innumerable societies, and they deal chiefly with archæological rather than with artistic aspects. They are often much belated, and seldom have good illustrations. They have many different systems of naming and of classification, and the names of people and places take a different aspect in French, German, and other foreign languages, since they are necessarily spelled phonetically. There is no common agreement as to dates previous to about 1600 B.C., so that an object dated 3000 B.C. in one report may be really older than one dated 4000 B.C. in another. Even in museums one has the same difficulty. For instance, in the Babylonian department of the British Museum, a mace head of Enannatum's time is labelled 4500 B.C., while he himself is dated 2900 B.C. in a recent book on Sumer and Akkad by Mr. L. W. King, one of Dr. Budge's assistants in that department.

These considerations will serve to show how cautious one has to be in expressing opinions about the progress or degeneration of art in any remote period. When the actual relics of that art have to be examined there is another difficulty. If only a few specimens have been found, deductions drawn from

them must be quite provisional. If great numbers have been discovered they are generally scattered about in so many museums that it is almost impossible to compare them properly. Some museums take pains to secure casts of the most important specimens not represented in their own collections, but too many authorities still look upon their museums as "treasure houses," and do not care for "worthless" imitations.

It is unfortunate that we have not more specimens of early seal engraving, for seals represent the state of art in their period better than amulets or offerings to the gods. The latter are more likely to be conventional or archaic, because in the choice of subject and treatment less liberty was allowed to the artists who made them. It has to be constantly borne in mind that art had little freedom or opportunity for expansion in times when it was dependent on the patronage of warrior kings, or on the favour of the priests. Art for art's sake was unknown. It was strictly utilitarian. But men to whom have been vouchsafed glimpses of the real beauty of the world cannot be bound for ever by the bonds of material utility. It was hard for them to steer a course between their patron's base desire for splendour or mere personal advantage, and their own vain longing to express the higher conceptions which might possess their souls, but were so difficult to fix in forms perceptible to other men. They succeeded best who were in touch with mother earth, and realising their limita-

tions were content to add grandeur and beauty to objects desired by mankind instead of making beauty and grandeur the only objects of their work.

All honour to those unknown men who throughout the ages have fought the brave fight against sordid and mercenary ideals. Their names are not recorded, and in their time they were seldom held in high esteem.

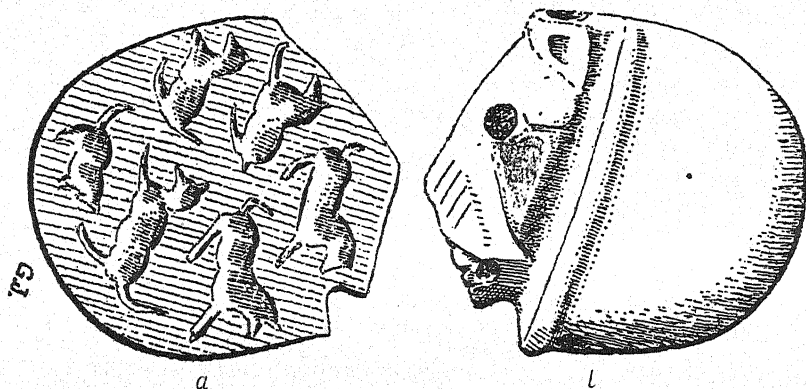


FIG. 217.—*a*, under side; *b*, upper side of a seal. Notice the curious ridge from ear to below the mouth, it is similar to the flat band in Fig. 158, representing the mane. Hard limestone. Actual size. From the second city at Susa.

They had few material luxuries, nor did they work for fame. They received no vain incongruous titles of knightly honour won by pen or brush or pencil;³⁹ almost as ludicrous as those higher martial titles of nobility won and worn nowadays by victors in fierce financial battles. They were imbued with high ideals, and they produced good work just as a tree produces fruit or flowers. Let us revere their memory, there are so many trees producing little else but leaves or

thorns! There is no reason to lament that they were not rewarded with high titles or base gold. They added to the welfare of the world more than they took from it. That is the measure of their glory, as the reverse is the measure of the wastrel's shame.

The objects shown in Figs. 217 and 218 are probably the very earliest known examples of seals, although, as no impressions made by them have yet been found, it is not quite certain whether they were used as seals or merely as amulets. As usual in early work animals, not men, are the subjects chosen. It is strange that a carver who could make such a good lion's head should have drawn his other animals with only two legs, but that agrees with our previous experience that carving in the round generally improved much faster than bas-relief or drawing.

There are very few of these specimens. Their antiquity was rather overstated in the first accounts, as they were supposed to have come from the earliest deposits in the great mound of Susa; that mistake has now been rectified (*Mémoires de la Délégation en Perse*, XIII., 1912, p. 60), and they are classed with the relics of the period immediately succeeding the destruction of the first city, the city which produced the strange pottery described at the beginning of this

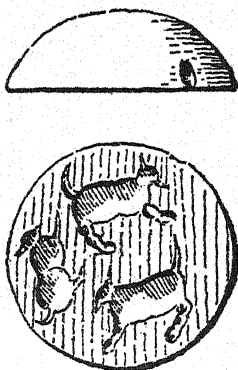


FIG. 218.—Limestone seal with perforation for a string. Susa. Actual size.

chapter. For that civilisation ended, like so many others, in a great catastrophe. Charcoal and ashes in widespread layers some sixty feet below the present surface of the mound bear mournful witness to the havoc and destruction wrought five thousand years ago.

When a city or a state was found to have suffered such a calamity and to have lost its special type of civilisation, archæologists often used to suppose that all its inhabitants had perished or migrated, and had been replaced by the conquering race. Now they are beginning to realise that this is very seldom the case. It is not easy to exterminate or banish an entire population. It does not seem ever to have been effected by predatory raids, but only by great migrations. Such migrations are rare, and are generally the result of climatic changes, or of new inventions of vast importance altering the whole conditions of men's lives. A raid like the Norman Conquest or the Mahomedan irruption does not immediately change the general conditions of life for all the conquered, but only for those of the upper class. If that class possesses higher art standards than their conquerors, their art will suffer serious modification. Unless it is firmly rooted in the general mass of the people, it will not survive the shock. The crude ideals of uncultured men will sway the minds of conquerors and conquered, and we shall see the fruitful vine of art wither and die down, because it had no depth of soil to grow in.

The Susa population seems to have been permeated with artistic feeling, and though their art

standards were altered by the conquest, its general growth was rather strengthened by the downfall of their upper class. I think we may assume that there



FIG. 219.—Thick earthenware fragments from second city at Susa ; showing the return to a naturalistic rendering of animal life.

was a conquest of Susa, and that it was effected by some alien foe, for although conquests may be made by the diffusion of ideas, they do not at the same time produce the blackened ruins that record the march of armies. That it was an alien foe seems proved by the great changes in the character of the relics found in the supervening strata. The fine pottery disappears ; its place is taken by a much coarser ware, which is sometimes decorated

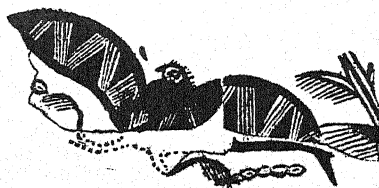


FIG. 220.—Three fragments pieced together showing a bird painted on pottery of the second period at Susa. The dotted legs are conjectural. A prototype of the Austrian and Russian double-headed eagle.

with fairly natural figures of animals (Fig. 219), and birds (Fig. 220). Instead of the cups we get large vases, often of graceful shapes, rather like those of the second predynastic period in Egypt.

But the designs are of better type, and instead of being drawn with a single colour, two colours—black and red—are often used with good effect upon

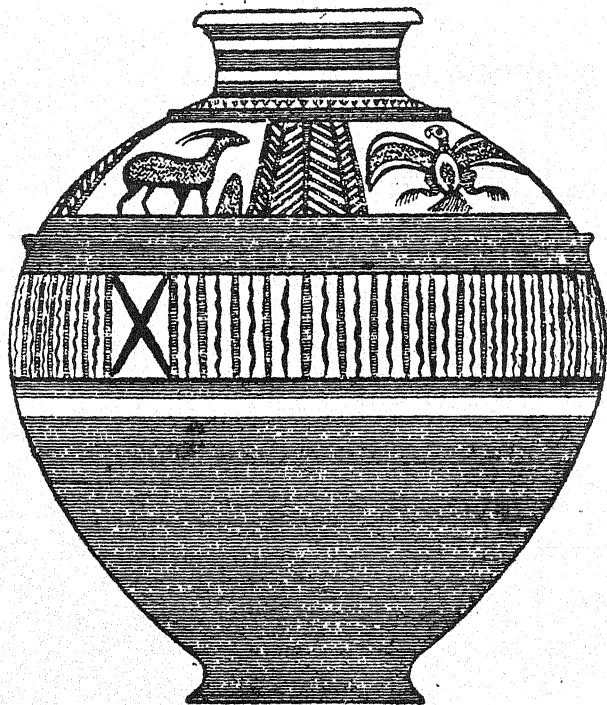


FIG. 221.—Large vase made on a potter's wheel. Second Susian period. Estimated as being contemporaneous with Naram-Sin's dynasty. The shaded part represents the red colouring, the blank spaces the natural yellowish colour of the clay. The thick black lines show the black colour used in these designs. M. Heuzey has traced the development of this Chaldean eagle into the emblem now used by European monarchs. (*Mon. et Mem.*, Piot. I. p. 19). From cemetery at Tépé Aly-Abad. One-fourth actual size.

a yellow ground (Figs. 221-2-3). The rectilinear character of the former period becomes less pronounced, semicircles and wavy lines are more fre-

quently used, and although the spiral has not yet been found on any of the thousands of vases that have been unearthed, we get this very special design (Fig. 220 *bis*) which is strangely similar to a favourite motive of the Cretan potters, less ancient by some fifteen hundred years (Fig. 308). Vases of dark coloured earth having incised designs (Figs. 221 *bis* and 222 *bis*) are found in these deposits, which M. J. de Morgan assigns to the period of Naram-Sin, therefore roughly contemporaneous with the sixth Egyptian

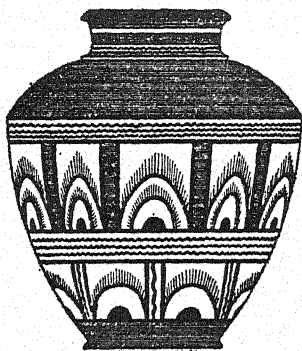


FIG. 222.—Vase from Tépé Aly-Abad (near Moussian). One-eighth actual size. Red and black design on yellowish clay. No satisfactory explanation has been given of the origin or meaning of these rayed semicircles.



FIG. 223.—Vase from Tépé Aly-Abad. One-eighth actual size. Compare with Fig. 311.

dynasty 2600 B.C. (see page 304, and also the Chronological Table, page 5). Occasionally a filling of white material is used to heighten the effect of these incisions (Fig. 223 *bis*).

Stone work improves, a few poor bas-reliefs are found, and the first signs are seen of those cylindrical seals which play such an important rôle in the

history of Babylonian art (Fig. 256). They seem to have been a Semitic invention; it is significant that they also occur among the relics of the earliest



FIG. 220 *bis.*—Second period, Susa.

dynasties of Egypt. Impressions were taken by rolling them over the soft clay; Fig. 224 is from a photograph of an impression made by a remarkably perfect

cylinder found at Susa. The animals are so well engraved that it would almost seem as if that unknown early phase of Elamite art (see page 259) had come to life again, loosened from its grave of

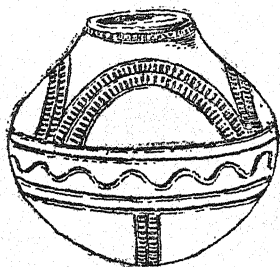


FIG. 221 *bis.*

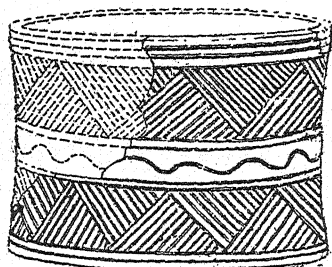


FIG. 222 *bis.*

Dark brown earthenware with incised designs. Second period, Susa.

artificiality by the advent of a strange and energetic race untrammelled by convention and still in touch with nature. On a similar cylinder (Fig. 225) the animals are not so well engraved, but they show that tendency to represent a full face instead of a profile which is so persistent in Chaldean art and



FIG. 224.



FIG. 225.

FIGS. 224 and 225.—Both these impressions were made on clay, which was then baked and glazed. The same accentuation of the shoulder-joint is seen in early Egyptian work (Figs. 133 and 137). The animals on the knife-handle and on this upper seal might well have been drawn by the same hand.

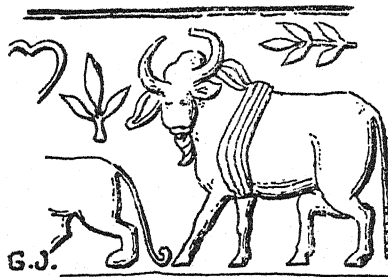


FIG. 226.—This design is very conventional; the seal cutter has mixed up the bull and the bison types. The heart-shaped ornament is found also on the pottery. The cross (Fig. 227) also occurs frequently in either the Greek or the Maltese form.

so strangely absent from all Egyptian work previous to the eighteenth dynasty. Figure 226 has been constructed from several imperfect and fragmentary impressions, a difficult process which has to be adopted when the original cylinders cannot be found. It shows a more advanced stage of full-face drawing, although the hind legs of the bull are not well rendered.

In time it may be possible to determine the relative age of these early cylinders, and thus to trace the development of the Chaldean seal-cutter's art. Impressions made by them are often found on clay tablets covered with cuneiform inscriptions, but

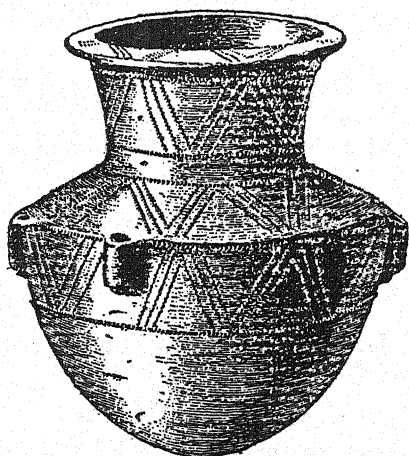


FIG. 223 *bis*.—Vase found at Tépé Aly-Abad.

So few specimens of this incised ware with white filling have been found, that it is difficult to be certain about its origin. The perforations of the handles are vertical, like those of the vases of central Europe. The Egyptian vases always had horizontal perforations.

these inscriptions seem all to have the same archaic character. Apparently the style of writing changed much less rapidly than the style of art, which exhibits very varied qualities in the different specimens. Some of them have flagrant defects of drawing but are redeemed by a certain originality of pose (Fig. 227). Some have that zigzag pattern

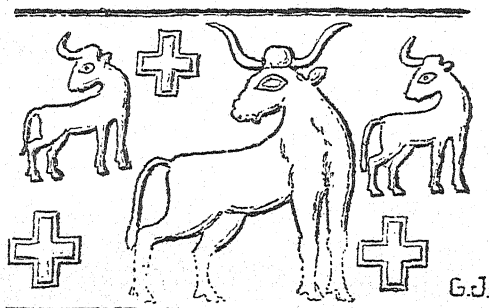


FIG. 227.—The seal engravers of Chaldea were like the cave men of France in their uncertainty as to the right manner of depicting a bull's horns when the head was in profile. In later times they seem to have almost always given him two horns and only one ear (Fig. 260), but the bison was generally given a perfectly full face of rather human character. Notice the Greek crosses.⁴⁰



FIG. 228.—The S signs on this seal impression and on Fig. 232 may be an undeveloped spiral. The horns and eyes are peculiar.

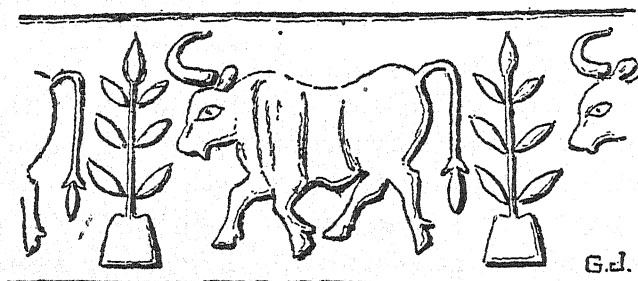


FIG. 229.—This bull strongly resembles one on an Egyptian plaque in the Berlin Museum.

on the bodies of the animals (Fig. 228) which is



FIG. 230.—Seal showing signs of fantastic treatment of an ordinary theme.

a favourite device of all people in the primitive stage. Others are full of life (Figs. 229 and 230), showing a keen appreciation of natural and simple forms, while not a few contain an element of fantasy quite in accordance with that phase of unreality through which all art appears to pass as it advances



FIG. 231.—This deer seems to be in absolute profile, but there are indications that the legs were doubled as in the ordinary conventional rendering of a galloping animal. The dragon seems to have his fore legs resting on a rock or cliff, but that was probably not intended by the engraver. It is more likely to be due to a flaw in the seal.



FIG. 232.—Fantastic animal with the fore part of an eagle and the hind quarters of a lion.

(Figs. 231 and 232). The drawing of the man in Fig. 233

would seem to show that he belongs to an earlier period than the man in Fig. 234. The latter has affinities with the early dynastic style of Egypt just as the fantastic



FIG. 233.—Incomprehensible signs, possibly hieroglyphics.



FIG. 234.—The oblong design probably represents a door.

animals in Fig. 232 have some similarity to those on the Egyptian palettes. That curious representation of a bull with only one horn (Figs. 227 and 229) is also

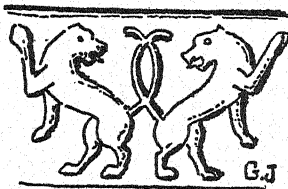


FIG. 235.—An exception to the rule of heraldic opposition.

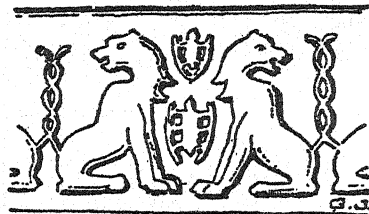


FIG. 236.—The figure between the lions may be meant for tortoises.

found in Egypt, but no designs similar to these pairs of lions (Figs. 235 and 236) have yet been found there, although one of the Egyptian hieroglyphs much resembles their strangely twisted tails. All these

specimens afford no absolute proof in favour of the claims of either country to precedence or originality. Père Scheil says that these Chaldean seal cylinders are previous to 4000 B.C., but he does not say what date he thinks that would correspond to in Egyptian chronology. In fact the dating of all the earlier periods in both countries is still largely a matter of conjecture, and at present it is premature to pick out any two of them as being contemporary.

The causes which led to that great change in Elamite art (see page 279) are still as unknown as those which led to the somewhat similar change in Egypt (see page 191). Judging from what took place in the neighbouring country, Babylonia, we may suppose that it was due to an invasion by that Semitic race which is supposed to have come from Arabia, and is known to have overrun the broad valley of the Tigris and Euphrates, and to have established itself as a dominant caste among the Sumerians of the Chaldean plains. The hill tribes who inhabited Elam would naturally be the last to come under its influence. The Elamites seem to have preserved their own language, but after a temporary improvement the national art died away. For the next thousand years or more it is to Chaldea that we must turn for evidence of progress.

The invaders of the Chaldean plains, unlike those who had such influence in Egypt, do not seem to have brought with them a higher form of civilisation when they first swarmed out of Arabia. That they were a

pastoral people appears evident from their calling a city "a tent," and their kings shepherds. Erech, one of the earliest of their settlements, was called the sheep-fold. The term invader is perhaps not quite correct; the Semite may have come in by peaceful penetration, but how he came or whence he came is still one of the most obscure of problems.⁴¹

The chief point that concerns us now is how his coming affected the development of art. I think a connection may possibly be traced between this infusion of Semitic ideas and the degeneration of the painted pottery and the appearance of figures carved on stone.

The Sumerian religion being animistic, especially encouraged the use of charms and magic signs. Probably all those designs painted on the pottery or engraved upon the cylinders were believed by their owners to exercise mysterious powers; thus the seals and cups and vases were in a certain sense their household gods.⁴²

The Semitic religion was anthropomorphic. These shepherd kings of Chaldea wanted human figures to represent their gods, and also they wanted to have themselves represented as gods or as kindred of the gods. Primitive artists have always found more difficulty in drawing the human form than in carving it; therefore, as soon as these kings could order artists to do work for them, they chose carved work instead of painting, and that sort of work came into fashion even among those Elamites and Sumerians who still believed

in the greater efficacy of the animal representations.

A great many fragments of carved work have been found at Tello. This is the modern name of an enormous mound of earth about 50 feet in height and many acres in extent, which marks the site of the ancient Chaldean city of Lagash (also called Shirpurla). In 1887 the French Government commissioned M. de Sarzec to explore it; his excavations have been the most successful and perhaps the most scientific of all that have yet been made in the great plain formed by the Tigris and Euphrates, which may be broadly described as Babylonia, although strictly speaking the name should only be applied to the centre part, and not to Assyria in the north or to Chaldea in the south.

After the sad death of M. de Sarzec, a victim to his devotion in the cause of science, the work was continued by Captain Cros, and it is still going on. Eight large well-illustrated reports entitled *Découvertes en Chaldée* have been issued by M. Heuzey, the keeper of the Oriental Antiquities in the Louvre Museum, where a number of the statues and other objects found at Lagash (Tello) and at Susa are to be seen. As Tello is in Turkish territory most of the best things were carried to Constantinople.

There are no neolithic remains at Lagash; the site was probably covered by the sea in neolithic times; now more than 200 miles of alluvial plain lie between it and the nearest coast line of the Persian Gulf. The earliest relics date from a time when cuneiform writing

was well developed and had lost the traces of its pictograph origin.

It is supposed that the Sumerians were then still predominant at Lagash, but it is very difficult to disentangle the story of the struggle between them and the Semites, and to be at all certain of the part played by each of these two races. It is generally held that the Sumerians were more artistic and perhaps less devoted than the Semites to material wealth and luxury. This would seem to fit in with the conception of a great ancient artistic Mediterranean race, non-Aryan and non-Semitic, extending from Spain to Elam, and possibly akin to the palæolithic cave men of France. Such a race may have formed the patient mass of unambitious workers whose love for nature and simplicity was exploited and corrupted by the Arabian Semites in Chaldea and in Egypt. The dominating caste stimulated science and all studies tending towards material improvements, but eventually had the same debasing influence on art that was evident in all lands affected in later times by the third Arabian wave issuing forth under Mahomed and his successors.

The oldest specimens of graven work from Lagash are strangely crude (Fig. 237). M. Heuzey says that they "represent in the primitive Chaldean sculpture a distinct epoch or a separate school. A bust of the same primitive type is in the British Museum." The bust he mentions is a small alabaster one (Fig. 238), unique of its kind. It can be seen in



FIG. 237.—Fragment, eight inches long, of a stone frieze found at Tello.



FIG. 238.—Alabaster bust inscribed with the name of the god Nebo. The nose had been mended and broken off again; apparently it was originally very large. British Museum. Height about eight inches.



FIG. 239.—Marble figure found by Mr. Banks at Bismaya (Nippur). About thirty inches high. Now at Constantinople. From a photograph presented by Sir Edwin Pears.

To face p. 291

the Babylonian and Assyrian room, Wall Case 38, among a number of other Chaldean figures. Very few specimens of the work of this school have been discovered, and its development cannot be traced.

Several small statues have been found at Tello showing rather a better style of sculpture, but very little seems to be known about them. In the Babylonian and Assyrian room of the British Museum there is a small and very crude statuette of an "early Sumerian royal personage," but no information is given about its origin. It is figured in the catalogue (Pl. XXXIII., p. 142) and dated (p. 144) about 2500 B.C. (Gudea's period), which seems rather late for such poor work. Now (1928) altered to 2800 B.C.

A much better specimen (Fig. 239), assigned by Mr. L. W. King to Ur Nina's dynasty (3000 to 2850 B.C.), was found by Professor E. J. Banks during the Chicago University explorations at Bismaya. This town lies about fifty miles north-west of Tello, and occupies the site of the ancient Nippur, which used to lie on the banks of the Euphrates, until that great river shifted its course some twenty miles to the westward. Mr. Banks gave this account of the discovery: "During the afternoon of the 27th of last January (1903), while standing on the summit of the temple at Bismaya watching the progress of the excavations, Abbas, a bright young Arab from Affedj, stuck his head out of the trench in which he was working and excitedly motioned to me. In

a moment I was in the trench. Two and a half metres below the surface, and imbedded in the west corner of the mud-brick platform of the west temple, appeared the smooth white shoulder of a large marble statue. As the discovery of such an object creates great excitement among the superstitious men, I quickly covered the white marble with dirt, and with the remark that it was nothing but a stone I transferred the gang to another place. The remainder of the afternoon was spent in wondering if the statue were perfect, or if its head were lacking, if it bore an inscription, and what its age might be.

“When at sunset the last man had left the excavations we descended into the trench, and with our hands carefully dug away the hard dirt from beneath the statue. The bent elbow appeared; we had found a statue with the hands free from the body. We dug towards the neck, and to our disappointment the marble came to an end; the statue was headless. Then digging at the other end we reached the feet; the toes were missing, but we recovered them from among the small fragments of marble which were scattered about in the dirt. It was dark when the statue was released, and, standing upright, by the light of a match we searched it over for an inscription, but beneath the clinging dirt nothing like writing was visible. Wrapping about it an aba, we each took turn in carrying it to camp, fully a quarter of a mile away. It was not an easy task, for our ancient king weighed nearly two hundred pounds.

"In the tent a bath was quickly prepared, and as the dirt was washed away three lines of a beautifully distinct inscription in the most archaic characters appeared, written across the right upper arm. They were but three short lines, little more than three words, but later, when I was able to translate them, they told us all that we most wished to know.

"About three weeks later, February 18th, a workman who was employed at the north corner of the temple, thirty metres from the spot where the statue was found, was clearing away the dirt from near a wall, when a large round piece of dirty marble rolled out. We picked it up and cleared away the dirt. Slowly the eyes, the nose, and the ears of the head of a statue appeared. I hurriedly took it to my tent and placed it upon the neck of the headless statue. It fitted; the statue was complete. From beneath the thick coating of dirt the face seemed to light up with a wonderful smile of gratitude, for the long sleep of thousands of years in the grave was at an end, and the long lost head was restored; or perhaps the smile was but the reflection of our own feelings." (*American Journal of Semitic Languages*, Chicago, 1904-5, p. 57.)

M. de Sarzec was not so fortunate with an early statuette discovered in the course of his excavations. He was watching a workman digging, when a stroke of the pick brought down a fall of earth and revealed a small alabaster figure. The digger, like many other men in higher walks of life, being more intent upon the work that he was doing than on its possible

results, raised his pick again, and "before I had time to rush forward and seize it, the pick, falling at that instant, broke off the head and crushed it." (*Découvertes en Chaldée*, p. 48.)

The smile observed by Mr. Banks is to be seen on other Chaldean statues and in a few Egyptian ones. It is very noticeable in archaic Greek statues during the experimental stage. Probably it was due to a desire to give animation to the face, instead of the usual rigid stare. The eyes of this statue now show hollow and expressionless; formerly they were bright with some precious material imitating their natural shape and colour. It was the custom for people in those days to have their eyebrows shaved and trimmed to form rigid curves. These were represented in sculpture by inlaid strips of metal; the empty grooves above the eyes now render it all the more difficult to judge of the original effect.

The name of the statue was read at first as Daudu, but now it is interpreted as Esar, King of Adab. Like many other statues of that period it is quite small, only about thirty inches high, including the pedestal. It is peculiar in having the arms standing out more freely from the body than was usual even in much later ages. The posture shows only a slight variation from the Chaldean attitude of reverence, that conventional folding of the hands which in Syria is still the proper way of expressing respect. These statues were not intended to commemorate the glory of the kings, but their devotion to their gods.

The hands, although much injured, are better modelled than the hands in any succeeding periods for many generations. Hands, indeed, presented a difficulty which few cared to tackle. They can be made almost as expressive as the face, but such rendering cannot be expected in early work, for even to the face it was only incidentally, almost as it were unintentionally, that sculptors gave any expression until about the sixth century before Christ. Within the narrow limits prescribed by royal or priestly ideals the sculptor might copy the features of his patron, or might represent some simple action, but nothing further. It is no wonder, then, that he neglected the study of hands, moulding the fingers in more and more impossible forms and positions, until in that debased Assyrian art he did not even care to put their proper number.

CHAPTER XI

CHALDEAN STATUES AND RELIEFS

IN dealing with palæolithic art we have seen that the growth of small bas-reliefs was possibly stimulated by the desire to satisfy an increased demand without expending any more time and trouble on the work. The same tendency would be felt in Chaldean times and would affect their work even when it was of a larger size. As the influence of the Semites increased, and wealth became more concentrated, the sculptor's energies were directed towards the decoration of palaces and temples rather than to the satisfying of a popular demand for amulets. Statues or large statuettes would be produced, and then friezes and panels in low relief, for they would make a greater show than statuary, and on them the story of the patron's deeds could be more easily expressed.

The relics of such work are, however, too few and too fragmentary to enable us to trace with any certainty its evolution during the struggles for political supremacy which raged among the numerous little city-states of Chaldea during the period preceding the domination of Sargon, the Semitic king of Akkad. His exact date has not yet been fixed, since the old computation, 3758 B.C., is now con-

sidered erroneous, and at least a thousand years have been subtracted from it. The evolutionary period of intestine Sumerian struggles ending with subjection to the Semite, may therefore be placed between 4000 and 2700 B.C. In the absence of a good series of statues, or low reliefs of large size, we have to be content with smaller carved objects, some of which can be approximately dated by the cuneiform inscriptions incised upon them. The most interesting of these relics is a large mace head (Fig. 240). The lions have the full-face aspect which seems to be characteristic of Sumerian art, but their manes are rendered in a style which, together with the profile face, may prove to be characteristic of the Semitic influence that appears to have affected both Egypt and Chaldea.



FIG. 240.—Limestone mace head dedicated by Mesilim, a Semitic king of Kish (previous to 3000 B.C.) to Nin-Girsu, the god of Lagash, a Sumerian city under Mesilim's suzerainty. The inscription is in rectilinear cuneiform (or arrow-headed) characters which have lost all the old curved lines due to a pictographic origin. The decoration has the same motive as the design on the silver vase (Fig. 244), but the eagle of Lagash, being on the top of the mace head, is not seen in this illustration. Six lions are rudely carved on the sides, each of them attacking with teeth and claws the hind quarters of the one in front. The manes are rendered in the same way as in the Egyptian carvings. This style died out in Chaldea. In later representations we get the more naturalistic style of Figs. 244 and 246. Size about eight inches by six inches.

It is possible that one of the underlying causes of the differences in the art of the two races is to be found in the dissimilarity of their

religious symbols and beliefs. People who live in a temperate climate have a natural love for the sun. When they have become sufficiently civilised to calculate the lapse of time by the movements of the sun instead of noting only the simpler variations of the moon, the sun god becomes the lord of heaven, and a full round face would be considered as the natural aspect of a benignant deity. In hot dry countries the sun is never revered to the same extent, and therefore the Semites issuing from Arabia would not have the same affection for it as the inhabitants of Chaldea, and they would not regard its disk as suggestive of a kindly influence. These primitive ideas would of course become obscured and complicated when professional priests found it necessary to frame elaborate definitions in order to exclude rivals from the emoluments of their caste. To trace the vagaries of theological word-spinners is a thankless task, but the simpler forms are well worth studying, for the fundamental ideas are extremely persistent. They may undergo curious inversions by reason of conquests or migrations, but their vitality is wonderful. We have a good example of it at the present day in Abyssinia. In that country the profile form is almost exclusively reserved for devils.⁴³ The feeling is so strong that when dies were cut in France for King Menelik's gold coinage they all had to be destroyed because his head had been represented in the profile manner customary in European countries. It might be difficult to discover the sources and

migrations of these dislikes and preferences, but the fact remains that they do exist and must be taken into account when studying the history of art.

About 3000 B.C. Lagash seems to have attained a prominent position under a Sumerian ruler called Ur Nina. The only sculptural work that can be

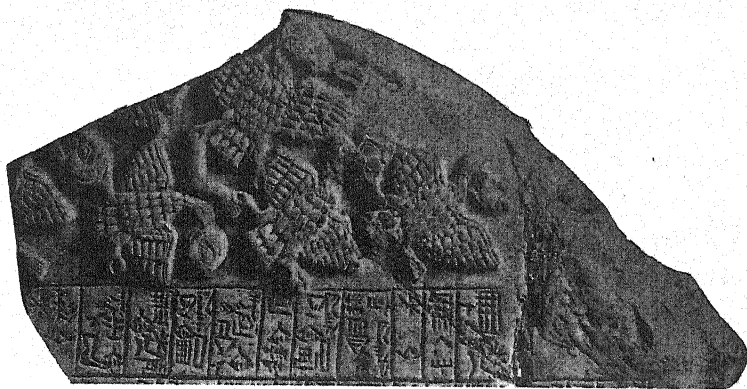


FIG. 241.—Fragment recording the victories of Eannatum (about 3000 B.C.). Part of a limestone slab (originally about six feet by four feet and five inches thick) now called the Stele of Vultures. It was ornamented on one side with historical scenes and inscriptions, on the other with mythological scenes and imprecations. It was buried near the ruins of an ancient palace of the rulers of Lagash, but only about half of its fragments have been recovered. Most of them are now in the Louvre, but two of them seem to have been stolen from Tello and sold to the British Museum, where they may still be seen.

definitely assigned to his period is a series of small votive plaques crudely depicting him and his family. Ur Nina's grandson, Eannatum, erected an elaborate monument with bas-reliefs representing his expeditions and slaughters. It is called the Stele of Vultures, because on one of the fragments (Fig. 241) vultures are represented pecking out the eyes of the

corpses on the field of battle. Archæologically it is very interesting, and M. Heuzey has written a long account of it in his *Études de l'archéologie orientale*, vol. i. pp. 49-82, but æsthetically the subjects and their treatment are crude and repulsive.

Not much progress can be discerned in the few votive plaques that are attributed to Eannatum's successors at Lagash. One of them is interesting because it shows the antiquity of that particular system (discussed in page 251) of depicting a seated goddess as presenting a full face while the rest of her body is in profile (Fig. 242). The curious markings on the foreground indicate hills, a simple convention which we have already noticed in very early Egyptian work (Fig. 161).

Another plaque, bearing the name of Entemena, (about 2900 B.C.) is noteworthy because it contains the best early example of that decorative widespread and long lived design, known as the guilloche, (Fig. 243) which may have been derived from the twisted lions' tails seen on the early seal impressions found at Susa (Fig. 236). On this plaque we have also an early instance of an heraldic emblem of a town; the eagle grasping the two lions represents the city of Lagash. It is similar to the bird that was figured on the large vase found near Susa, but here the Chaldean tendency to give a full face instead of a profile view is apparent. The artist has even attempted the difficult task of giving a full face to his lions, straining their heads upwards to seize the eagle's wings.



FIG. 242.—Fine white limestone slab with square hole in centre for the support. The nude figure is watering a sacred plant. Compare with the goddess Fig. 258. About seven inches high. Louvre.



FIG. 243.—Plaque made of a composition of clay and bitumen, perhaps a natural product. It was broken in transit to Paris, this illustration is taken from a cast made by M. de Sarzec before sending it. Notice the calf similar to the animal in Fig. 244. Height ten inches.



FIG. 244.—Silver vase found at Tello. It took many months to dissolve off the incrustation which covered the whole vase but is now only seen on the feet. About fourteen inches high.

Outline drawing had during this period made considerable progress. Judging by the comparatively few examples hitherto discovered it was chiefly employed for decorative work on metal, and on the shell plates that were used instead of ivory for inlaying. In using this term decorative we have constantly to bear in mind that decorative effect was quite a secondary idea; the main purpose was to please or propitiate some unseen power, or to create a talisman which should convey some special power to the possessor of the decorated object. Any art criticism which does not take this into account is liable to go grievously astray. At present we are continually hampered by the inability of the archæologists to explain the meaning and purpose of many of the designs, and therefore it is often useless to speculate why the artists of various ancient countries adopted or evolved different styles or conventions in trying to express themselves. But it is a most fruitful field of inquiry, and will in time produce very interesting results.

The great skill in outline drawing attained by these precursors of the Babylonian and Assyrian civilisation is shown by the figures engraved on a silver vase made for Entemena (Fig. 244). We find there the same full-faced eagle and lions that we saw on his votive plaque, but in this case each lion is turning its head to attack a goat. In all similar Egyptian representations (Figs. 138 and 145) the lion is drawn in profile; that fashion of depicting it does not appear

in Chaldea until much later (Fig. 256). The Chaldean lion, or lion-headed bird, is frequently represented as attacking a bull (Figs. 245 and 246), but on Entemena's vase and plaque the bovine animal occupies a separate zone. It is drawn without horns, and in a curious attitude as if just about to rise to



FIG. 245.—Drawing, incised on a shell, of a lion-headed eagle attacking a bison. It is sometimes called a celestial bull, but the bull created by Anu at Ishtar's request, to punish Gilgames for resisting her charms, was generally represented in profile and with wider horns, rising not from the side but from the top of the head, as in Figs. 246 and 260. Actual size.



FIG. 246.—Drawing on shell, probably used for inlaid work, as ivory was used in Egypt. Actual size.

its feet. That type does not seem to have been at all persistent, though the art motive of a full-faced lion attacking a bull had extraordinary vitality. It persisted through all Chaldean art, migrated to Mycenæ, and was adopted by Greeks who perhaps had never seen a lion in their lives.

In two of the drawings (Figs. 247 and 248) there



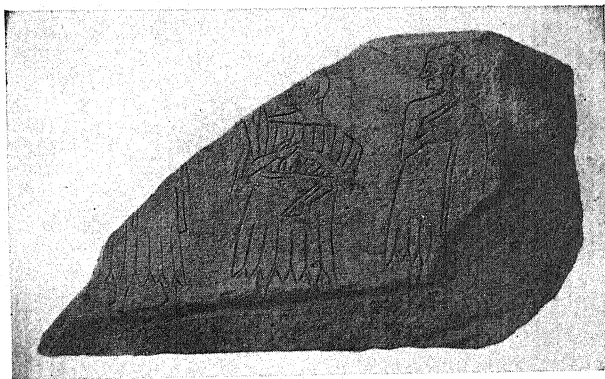


FIG. 247.—Drawing incised on a fragment of white limestone, ten inches long.



FIG. 248



FIG. 251.—Only a few fragments of this stele have been found. It is of fine white limestone resembling marble, and is carved on both sides. Height about twelve inches. All these specimens are in the Louvre Museum.



FIG. 249



FIG. 250

FIGS. 248 to 250.—Shell plates found at Tello, about half actual size.

seems to be an attempt to break away from the traditional error of placing a full-face eye in a profile head. The eye is in each case slightly foreshortened, but it would be rash to accept such a startling innovation as intentional. It may only be an imitation of the animal eye (Figs. 249 and 250), an imitation which is frequently seen in early Greek drawings.

The next stage in the development of relief sculpture is seen in two fragments of a "Stele of Victory," erected for one of the Semitic kings of Akkad (Fig. 251). The composition is still pictographic, the figures being arranged in zones forming a continuous band, a device common to all work that is only a chronicle of events, though it may be as elaborate as that on Trajan's column or as simple as the childish embroidery of the Bayeux tapestry. The figures are more diverse and are far better modelled than in any previous work, but the treatment does not seem to be inspired by any higher ideals.

Although we have so few art records left from those early centuries, there are many inscriptions and other indications which show that during this period the Semitic race became dominant over the whole Babylonian plain, organising its resources, regulating its language, and apparently invigorating its art. They were not yet numerous enough to debase it with their sordid and mercenary ideals.

Lagash (Tello) and other towns and principalities having been united to form the Semitic kingdom of Akkad, Naram-Sin, one of its earliest kings,

undertook the siege of Susa and the conquest of Elam, about 2600 B.C.

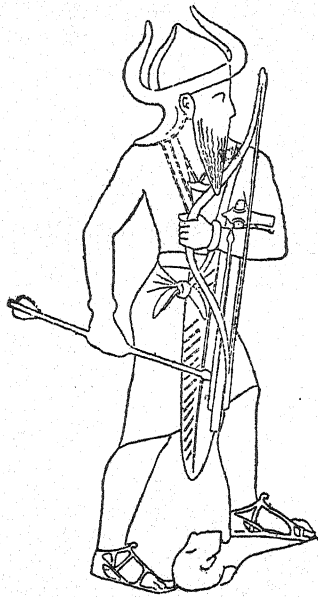


FIG. 253.—Sketch of the figure of Naram-Sin treading on a fallen foe. The horns which adorned the head-dress of kings and deities were always shown in front view even on a profile head. Some of the artists of these periods may have realised the incongruity, but their patrons must certainly have preferred the only view which left a strong impression on their minds and which they could easily recognise.

To commemorate his success he had a sandstone slab (Fig. 252) carved with low relief figures of himself (Fig. 253) and his followers pursuing the enemy into the mountains and forests. It is commonly called the Stele of Victory. Taking it as a whole, and having regard to its general conception, its bold relief, its careful execution, and especially to the grouping of its figures, it may be said to be one of the finest of all known monuments

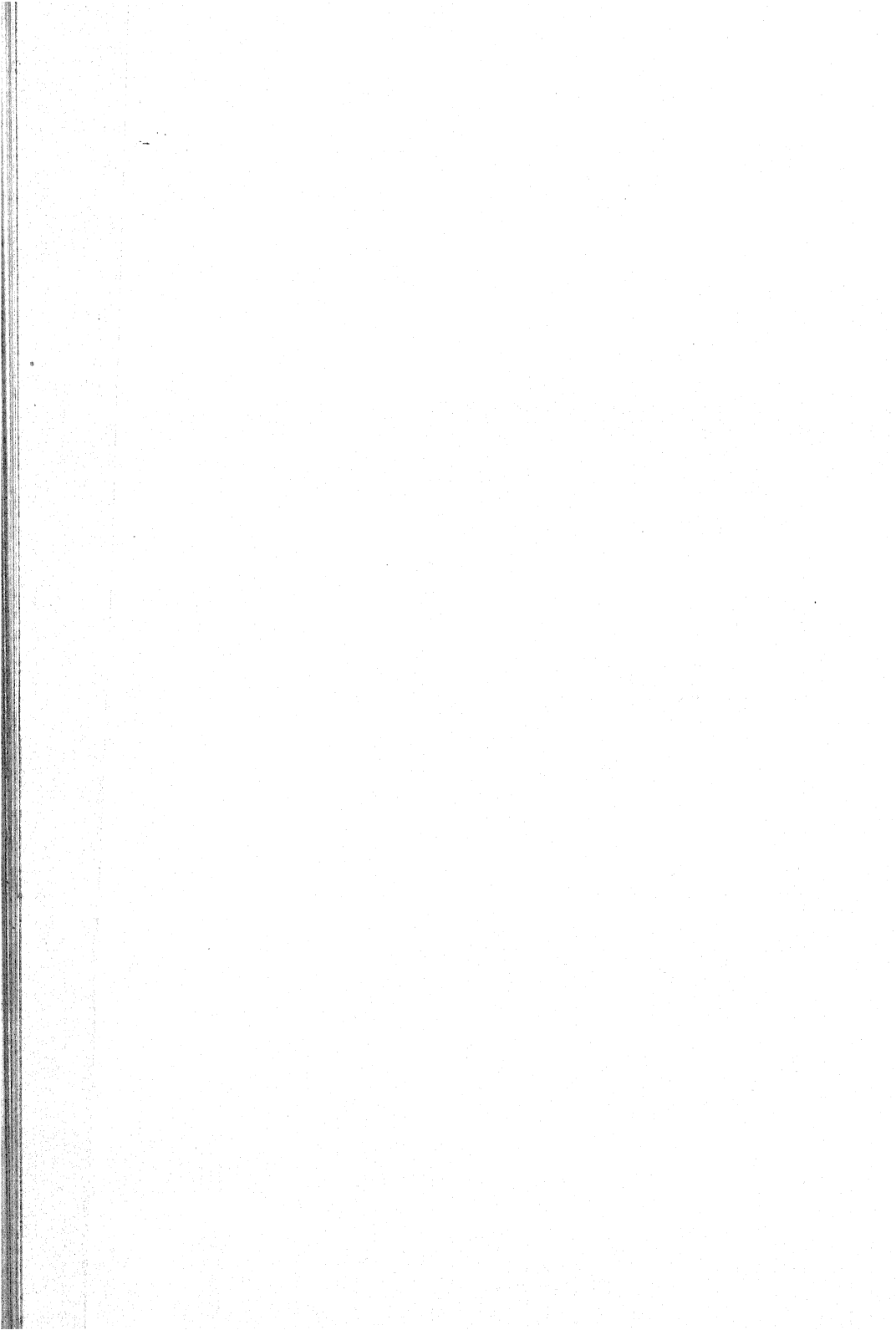
previous to those of Grecian times. There is little of that angularity and feeling of constraint that is characteristic of all the serious work of Egypt. M. de Morgan, in his account of it, says, "If Chaldea had not been impelled by the

force of circumstances towards the brutal impressions caused by constant struggles, she would have produced very high art; her beginning provided all the



FIG. 252.—Stele of Victory found at Susa. Now in the Louvre. Yellowish sandstone. Height about six feet.

To face p. 304



elements." *La Revue de l'Art Ancien et Moderne*. July-Dec., 1908.

During the next hundred years the advance was still more rapid. As far as we can gather from the scanty records unearthed in the northern cities, the improvement was more noticeable in that southern part of the country where the Sumerians had not yet lost all their influence.

Susa being in the highlands of Elam was still too primitive or too far away from the centres of progress to share in the advance, though we have a remarkable proof that its population preserved its love of art, and had not become degraded by that lust of domination so characteristic of its Semitic conquerors. When the kingdom of Akkad went the way of all kingdoms founded on violence and greed, and began to sink so miserably that now even the site of its capital cannot be found, the Elamites rebelled against their oppressors, freed themselves, and again founded an independent kingdom. Many centuries later (about 1100 B.C.), under a king called Choutrouk Nakhounta, they made a raid upon the city whence the redoubtable Naram-Sin had in olden times marched forth to conquer them. There they found the Stele of Victory, commemorating the defeat and slaughter of their forefathers. Instead of breaking down the carved work thereof, as the Semites used to do, they carried it in triumph back to their own distant city. Strange irony of fate; the preservation of the best record of their enemy's prowess is due

to the forbearance of insensate revenge and the broad-minded appreciation of art shown by the descendants of his victims!

Yet it was not a pleasant subject for contemplation except to men with Asiatic minds. Certainly it does not show the same delight in carnage and in human suffering that is so apparent in the earlier sculptures, but it represents the same glorification of the strong man triumphing in unequal contest over an unresisting foe that we find in all these early works. Ruthless oppression and rapacity are covered with a thin veneer of religion, but mercy is unknown.

It is the beginning of a dismal history. The dominant classes, which seem to have been recruited chiefly from that old Arabian Semitic race and imbued with the same evil principles, founded or seized various capitals, and called their empire by different names, but it was always the empire of greed. Well organised for martial and commercial robbery, they drained the conquered lands while neglecting to foster the resources of their own country. As time goes on the empire extends its baneful sway over the whole of that fair region, the fabled site of Paradise. It then stretches out its greedy claws to Syria and to Asia Minor, and even as far as Egypt, sucking the life-blood of the people, and becoming diseased and bloated with its loathsome food. At last, when outwardly at the height of its prosperity, a sudden blow pierces its mercenary armour, and the miser-

able Assyrian tyrant collapses under the heel of Cyaxares.

It was not a period of unmixed evil, for good and evil are always so interwoven that we can hardly conceive of the existence of the one without the other. In art good and noble influences were at work, possibly assisted by religion, though we see very little evidence of it. When brute forces are arrayed against each other in a struggle for existence and for mere material luxuries, the most successful religious leaders are those who take advantage of sordid hopes and superstitious fears. Ferocity is more easily mitigated by such means than by exhortations to practise justice and to love mercy; most of those priests who had sympathy with their fellow-men would naturally adopt the easiest, perhaps the only means at their disposal. This is the most charitable way of regarding the elaborate fictions of religions; but those who adopt bad means are tempted to use them to attain bad ends; the process of degeneration can too often be traced in the relics of their art.

To trace degeneration would require a special and much longer study. The study of progress is more interesting, though in Chaldea, a land of clay houses and clay books, we have fewer records of the growth of art than of the growth of literature. The range of subjects too was much more limited than in Egypt. It is doubtful whether there ever was any popular art, for the Chaldeans seem to have had no popular religion save that of fear. Even their gods were always

quarrelling among themselves, and were supposed to be dependent on human offerings for their food and pleasures. A strange reflex effect of the conditions of life in a country torn by constant struggles for petty supremacy, and where the few available luxuries seem to have been absorbed by the rulers and the priests. However, we have only the official descriptions of their religious beliefs, and it has been justly observed that official religion is no true indication of popular beliefs. Buddhism does not recognise the efficacy of prayer, and yet the Buddhist people pray.

Some day we may discover more evidences of popular art, but an alluvial plain does not offer favourable conditions for their preserval. The nearest approach to anything of that sort is shown by the seal cylinders generally representing mythological episodes. We have seen that it is extremely difficult to discover what the engravers desired to express in the earlier seals; it is also by no means easy to interpret the meaning of many of the later ones. When using the term later with respect to seal cylinders it must always be remembered that there is very little conclusive evidence as to their date, most of them having either no inscriptions or else only vague references to unknown gods or kings. Their comparative age has generally been estimated by their style, but that is now beginning to be recognised as a very unsatisfactory test. Great numbers of them have been collected, but unfortunately very few of the collectors know exactly where their specimens were



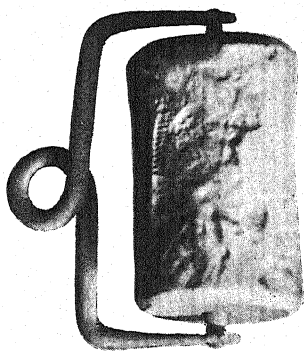
FIG. 254.



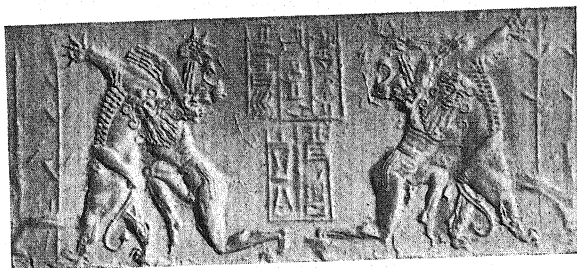
FIG. 255.

FIG. 254.—The goddess seems to have taken refuge in a thicket, which a god is hacking down. A smaller god presents her with a mace. The seated goddess with a flounced dress is inhaling the fumes of a sacrifice. Found at Tello.

FIG. 255 —Probably very early work. In British Museum.



a



b

FIG. 256.—(*a*) Cylinder in the British Museum, from which the impression (*b*) was made. The wire handle and axle is conjectural; there is no evidence to show how these cylinders were rolled over the clay. Actual size.

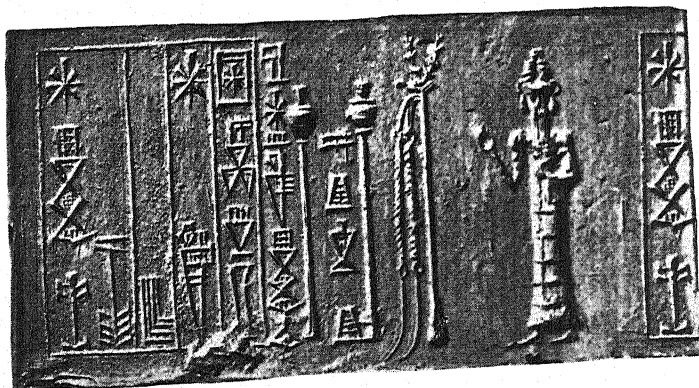


FIG. 257.—The word physician is mentioned in this inscription, but the figure has the horned head-dress of a deity. The three "standards" in front of him have not yet been explained. Found at Tello. Three-quarters of actual size.

dug up, for such portable curiosities have a ready market and pass through many hands, and perhaps through many generations of possessors before reaching Europe. Many forged specimens have been produced, and some genuine examples have had alterations or additions made to them in modern times or even by their ancient Babylonian owners.

Thus there are many pitfalls for students of these relics which are so fascinating and seem to bring us so closely in touch with the daily life of bygone times. As the old cylinder rolls once more over the plastic clay we see appear in strange relief the very forms which greeted the expectant eyes of men who lived in long-forgotten days in far away Chaldea, eyes that rejoiced at the plain evidence of the protection of those immortal gods whose godship has not lasted as long as the poor stone engraved to celebrate their power and immortality. Eyes that glistened with warm sympathy as upon the clay the simple tale was told of the misfortunes of some persecuted goddess (Fig. 254); eyes that shone with delight at the story of a hero's great success (Fig. 256). In imagination we may see the pride of ownership setting its seal on stores of corn and wine and oil, or signing a contract hopeful of much gain. Then the gaunt physician rolls out his cabalistic signs (Fig. 257), the hunter or the cattleman rudely commemorates the deadly spring of some devastating lion (Fig. 255), the humble suppliant recalls his promise to make a sacrifice to that mysterious goddess Ishtar (Fig. 258).

This cylinder is one which awakened a great deal of interest in the subject at the beginning of last century, but I have not been able to get any better illustration of it than this rough sketch published in 1815 by its purchaser, Mr. C. J. Rich, in his pamphlet *Memoir on the Ruins of Babylon*. Mr. W. H. Ward gives the same illustration in his *Seal Cylinders of*



FIG. 258.—Seated profile figure of Ishtar (recognisable by the weapons on her shoulders and the lion at her feet) with her face in front view. The star above the altar is the conventional Chaldean method of representing the sun.

Western Asia (Washington, 1910), and he says that he does not know what has become of the cylinder. His book is perhaps the most comprehensive that has yet appeared, dealing solely with this subject, but unfortunately the illustrations are sketches instead of photographs. But few references are given, and there is no index, therefore it is not very useful to art students. At present it seems almost impossible to make a thorough study of the artistic evidence afforded by the innumerable cylinders scattered all

over Europe in public and private collections. Perhaps when those at the head of affairs have realised that museums are for students as well as for sight-seers they may provide the officials with funds for securing casts. A good beginning might be made with these seal impressions, since they would not be very expensive, and would afford almost as good a means of study as the originals themselves. One of the finest specimens is that one (Fig. 256) now in the British Museum, showing Gilgames with his arm around a lion's body, apparently about to lift it up and dash it to the ground. A work so extraordinarily vigorous and free that one can hardly believe it to have been executed four



FIG. 259.—Assyrian low relief of Gilgames and the lion. In the Louvre.

or five thousand years ago, and to have been a forerunner of such a stilted style as we see in an Assyrian rendering of the same subject (Fig. 259). In this last example the curious conservatism of that nation is shown by their still representing Gilgames'

full face, although their other work is always in profile. It may be that they represented him thus because he was identified with their sun god. In the coarse accentuation of the muscles of his legs we may see the influence of that delight in mere brute



FIG. 260.—Impression of a cylinder found at Tello, supposed to be of Gudea's time. The profile figure confronting the lion may be intended for the owner of the seal, or for some one he wished to propitiate. Gilgames has the usual full face and no clothing except a girdle, which, in conjunction with his very slender waist, may be the prototype of the Cretan representations of strong men. The eagle of Lagash stretches its claws towards the two human-headed bison in the time-honoured manner. They seem, however, to have been mixed up in the designer's mind with Eabani and his struggle against Gilgames, who apparently is duplicated in the right-hand figure.

force which was a characteristic of the Assyrians, and was reflected in all their art.⁴⁴

The well-known cylinder showing Gilgames watering the celestial bull is of better execution, but not so full of life. Another favourite subject was Eabani, a sort of Chaldean satyr in form, but not in habits, a friend of Gilgames, and his ally in vanquishing the celestial bull (Fig. 260). These myths are pro-

bably the echoes of the stories of real deeds performed ages ago when wild beasts were common enough in Chaldea. Abbé Breuil thinks that this story of a celestial bull with human face originated from degenerate drawings of real bisons, copied from pictures drawn by artists who in ancient times had often seen the actual animal. In a short article pub-

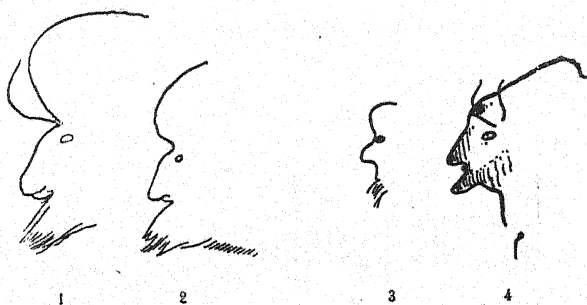


FIG. 261.—1. Sketch made by Prof. Breuil of a bison's head incised on the rock at Altamira. 2. Sketch of the same head published by M. Alcade del Rio in *Portugalia* (1906), p. 148, with this explanation: "No. II. shows an unmistakable profile of a human head, so strongly accentuated that it inclines me to believe that the artist had grasped the typical features of his race." 3 and 4. Sketches of similar heads of bison by other archaeologists.

lished in the *Revue Archéologique*, 1909, i. p. 250, he shows how even modern archæologists, copying some of those faithful palæolithic drawings of bison's heads, have supposed them to represent human faces, and have published them under that designation (Fig. 261).

It is possible that the story of Eabani, tamed by a female, may really represent the first domestication of wild animals, by the same process now used in

India for catching and taming wild elephants. It would be interesting if we could discover any very early illustrations of that story about Eabani. Such a discovery is not very probable, because pictograph stories require a certain amount of skill in grouping, and that is a skill which is not developed at an early stage. There are a few instances of it among these seal cylinders, notably the one depicting the disastrous attempt of Etana to reach heaven on the back of a



FIG. 262.—Impression of a seal cylinder found at Tello, showing Etana on the back of an eagle starting on his disastrous flight to heaven. His strength or his courage failed when he had nearly reached his goal.

friendly eagle (Fig. 262). Dr. Edward Meyer considers this "one of the most wonderful art creations of Babylon." It is easy to read into a picture much more than the artist ever intended, but I think that the accentuation of the astonishment of the shepherds and their dogs in the centre of the picture by contrasting them with tranquil unobservant groups of women at their daily work, and by goats slowly issuing from the fold, is a device which has no parallel for many a hundred years.

In some of these seal cylinders the postures and costumes have a curiously modern look due to a certain extent to the fashion of suspending the principal garment from the waist and giving it a flounce-like arrangement. That modern appearance is also noticeable in many Cretan representations, and is due to the same cause. Such similarities must often occur among nations that wear skirts. Terra-cotta figurines have been found in Bœotia which seem to show that hooped skirts were worn there three thousand years ago. These resemblances have no great importance, and cannot be taken to prove any continuity of art or any connection between races.

Indeed, there can only be three distinct types of garment—the loin cloth, suspended from the waist and developing into the skirt or trousers; the loose wrap or cloak, suspended from the shoulder and developing into the various forms of toga; and lastly the shirt, fitted on to the shoulders and developing into a coat or a jacket. The effect of costume on art is too far reaching to be discussed here, but it may be noted that the heavy Chaldean skirt probably prevented sculptors from studying and representing the lower limbs. Even in modelling the feet they failed as miserably as with the hands.

There is a sad lack of specimens of the sculptural work produced during the two centuries that preceded and the century that came after the triumphal creation of Naram-Sin's Stele of Victory. We should expect to find at least some statues of the gods,

but possibly they were made of wood, and used chiefly as supports for the clothing and adornments which the records say were lavished on them. They were fed and anointed, treated in fact just as human beings, even being exhorted by the priests to wash their hands before partaking of the food set before them. Still it is strange that no statues of Chaldean gods have yet been found. The belief that the capture or destruction of the image of the city-god gave its captor power over that city, may have brought about the destruction of all of them in turn. But also it may have induced some cities to hide them very carefully in periods of danger, and perhaps in time their hiding-places will be discovered.

Some day when a real love of art and a desire for knowledge has led more people to further the exploration of the neglected sites of cities that flourished in the valley of the Tigris and Euphrates, long before those two majestic rivers had united to form a single stream, we may be able to trace the steps that led up, in little more than a century, from the vigorous but archaic style of Naram-Sin's time to the refined productions of Gudea's sculptors.

A Sumerian by birth, Gudea ruled over Lagash (now called Tello) nominally as a deputy of the Semitic Akkadian kings, but his city had shaken off their yoke for many years, and had since maintained an independent and apparently peaceful existence. The French excavations at Tello have unearthed an astonishing number of statues and bronzes dating





FIG. 263

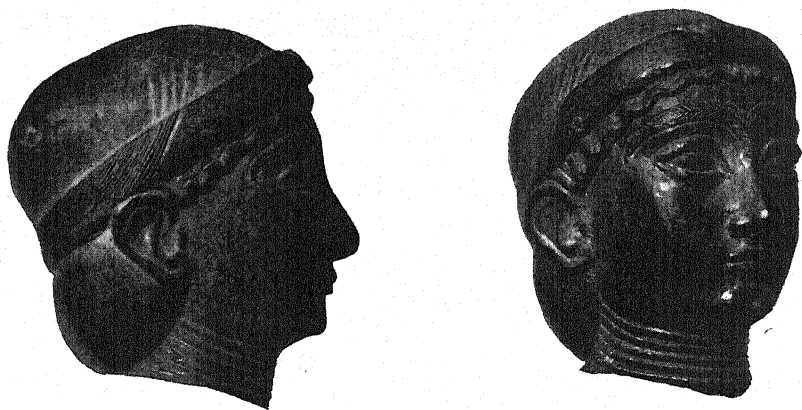


FIG. 264

FIGS. 263 and 264.—Most of the Chaldean statues are fragmentary and headless, but by a fortunate chance the head of this small masterpiece was found not far from the body. The lower part has not yet been recovered. The high prices paid by unscrupulous "curiosity" collectors may have caused it to be stolen for some museum or private person. The dishonesty of collectors is proverbial, yet these people consider themselves highly cultured and lift up their voices in righteous indignation against ignorant men who, oppressed by poverty, transgress the law. Height of this fragment, seven inches. Grey green diorite. Louvre.

from this golden age of Asiatic art. Many of them represent Gudea himself, but this can only be gathered from their inscriptions, for most of them are headless.

Consider this statuette of a Chaldean lady (Figs. 263 and 264). It is not of soft stone, cut rapidly in moments of happy inspiration; it is not moulded bronze, cast from a model altered and improved perhaps a hundred times before the artist could achieve his high ideal. It was carved with infinite boldness, patience and skill in one of the toughest of all rocks, a fine grained diorite. Does it not show the strength of will as well as the delicacy of touch possessed by that unnamed sculptor?

It is sad that the conditions of the times should not have allowed such a type to flourish long. Lagash increased its wealth and extended its borders, but omitted to strengthen its defences against envious assailants from without. It never seems to have entered the Asiatic mind that to raise the general condition of the common people would be the best safeguard against barbarous and famished invaders. The ideal of an Asiatic ruler was to gather luxuries for himself and his caste at the expense of his subjects. They were expected to be grateful for the few crumbs that fell from his table. He gave them work, to use a modern phrase; why should they grumble if he enriched himself while they remained sunk in poverty? But this sort of destitution has an enfeebling effect, for poverty, like hunger, is made worse by the pre-

sence and contrast of unattainable plenty. Invaders, on the other hand, had generally been hardened by destitution, shared equally by leaders and their men. There was more energy in the attack than in the defence because there was less solidarity among the defenders. Thus the very conditions of peace and plenty which should have enabled art to flourish and expand brought about the downfall of its unwise patrons.

And in all that fair valley there is no evidence of any growth of art after this period. It pandered to the evil passions of domination and display, of heartless luxury and pitiless chicanery, until, under the rule of those robber merchants the Assyrians, whose crown prince was a dealer in wool as well as a stealer of slaves, it produced those harsh and brutal sculptures which now disfigure the walls of the British Museum.⁴⁵

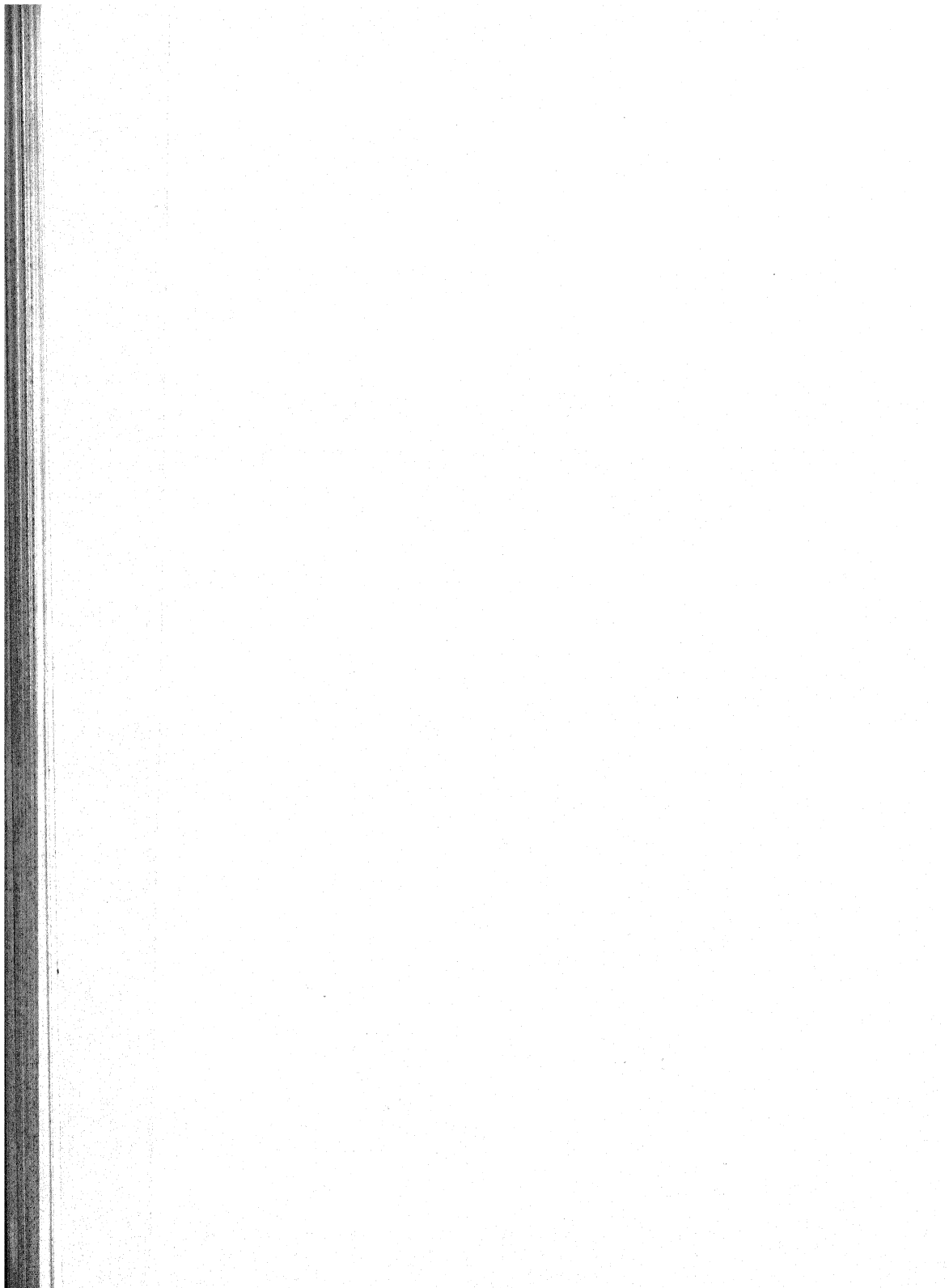
During all these struggles for material advancement most of the productions of the best and immediately succeeding periods were mutilated or destroyed. Captain Cros' account of the finding of this statue (Fig. 265) shows the fate that overtook Gudea's city: "In January 1903 we found a headless statue of green diorite lying with its base upwards in a mass of cinders, charcoal, and raw brick reddened by fire. The building must have been destroyed by a great conflagration" (*Revue d'Assyriologie*, 1904, p. 9).

The Turkish government retains most of the specimens dug up at Tello; but by a strange coincidence this statue found its way to the Louvre Museum,



FIG. 265.—Statue of Gudea (2450 B.C.). Diorite. About four feet high.
Louvre.

To face p. 318



to which some years before its turbaned head had been presented, though nobody suspected that they belonged to one another. When it was being examined by the museum experts, M. Leon Heuzey noticed that the shape of the fracture at the neck seemed to correspond with that of one of the heads exhibited in the museum and labelled "nameless." It was sent for and found to fit so exactly that there could be no doubt about its being the original head contemptuously struck off by the victors at the sack of Lagash.

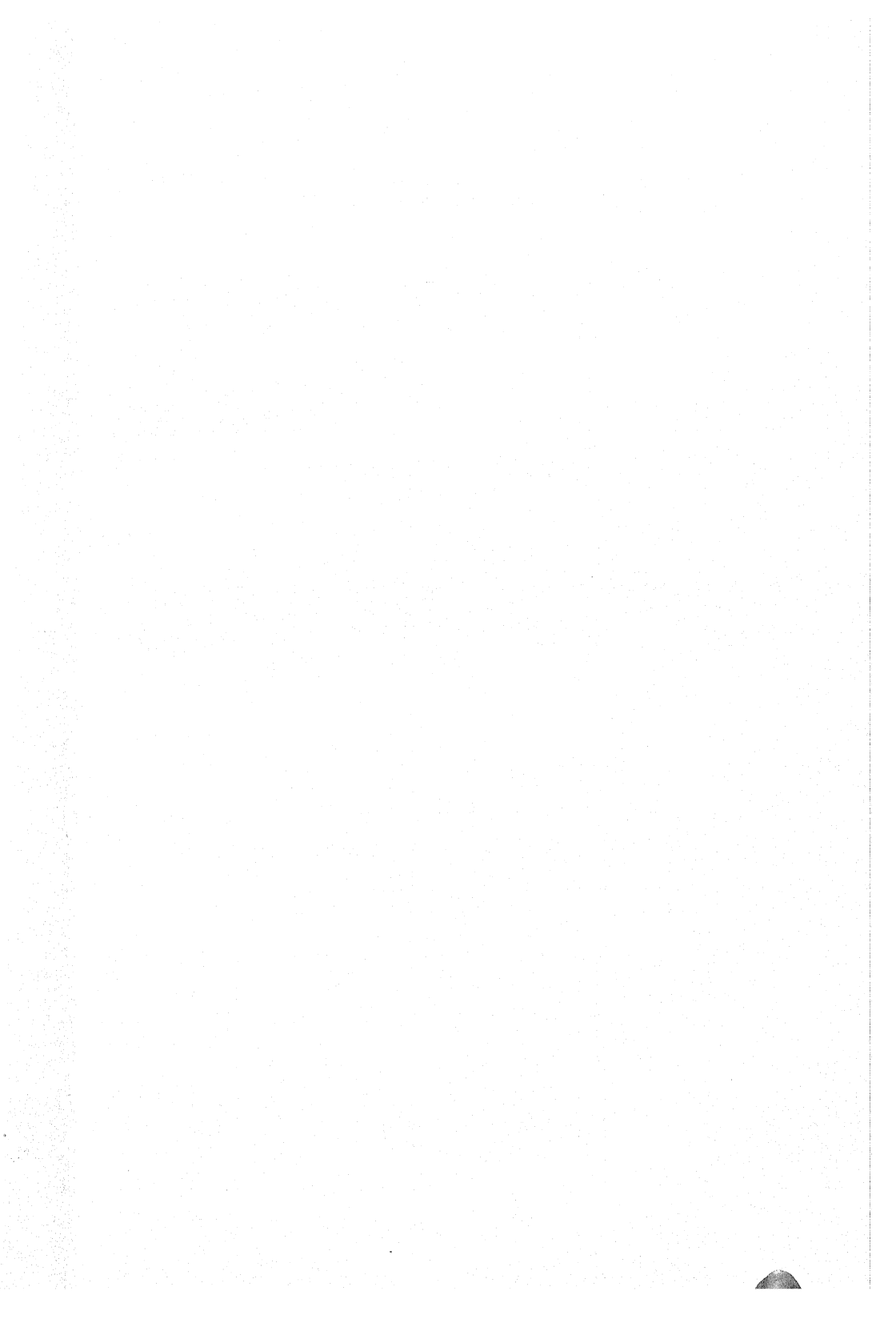
If that cunning fiction of the Egyptian priests were true, that a man's soul cannot have a happy after life unless he is provided with a material image to inhabit, what joy this replacement of his head would have given to pious Gudea after so many thousand years of ghostly wanderings. He seems to have been a good prince and anxious for the welfare of his people. In one of his inscriptions he makes use of the word liberty—an evil-sounding word to most rulers of that time, as it is even now to men with minds of Asiatic type. What would he think of the present condition of the masses in Paris and of the relation between the rulers and the ruled in modern Europe?

Until the whole country from Nineveh to the Persian Gulf has been better explored it would be rash to pronounce any final opinion about the degree of perfection reached in sculpture. We have now no other criterion of its art, for no paintings have been

discovered and no drawings, except those few engraved shells and that silver vase of Entemena. It is an unfortunate deficiency, since sculpture and seal engraving are too limited in their field to afford good grounds for judging how far Chaldean artists attained success in the expression of ideas and feelings. It seems, however, as if we might fairly consider Gudea's time as the golden age of Babylonian art. None of its productions are of such excellence as those of the fourth Egyptian dynasty, although that dynasty is supposed to have flourished several centuries earlier. It is just possible that they were contemporaneous, for their respective dates are still undecided, and no records have yet been discovered of any definite relations between the two countries previous to about 1600 B.C.

There is a certain amount of force and originality about the sculptures of Gudea's time. They also show great technical skill and good anatomical observation, though the fingers are often twisted into impossible positions and the heads are generally too large for the bodies. M. Heuzey thinks the reason for this was that "the Chaldean sculptor regulated his work by the form and disposition of the original block, which he had already begun to regard as a natural statue or betyle. First he carved out the head, then he utilised the rest of the block as best he could." (*Revue d'Assyriologie*, 1904, p. 21.)

To understand this view we have to remember that the Semitised Chaldeans, in common with many



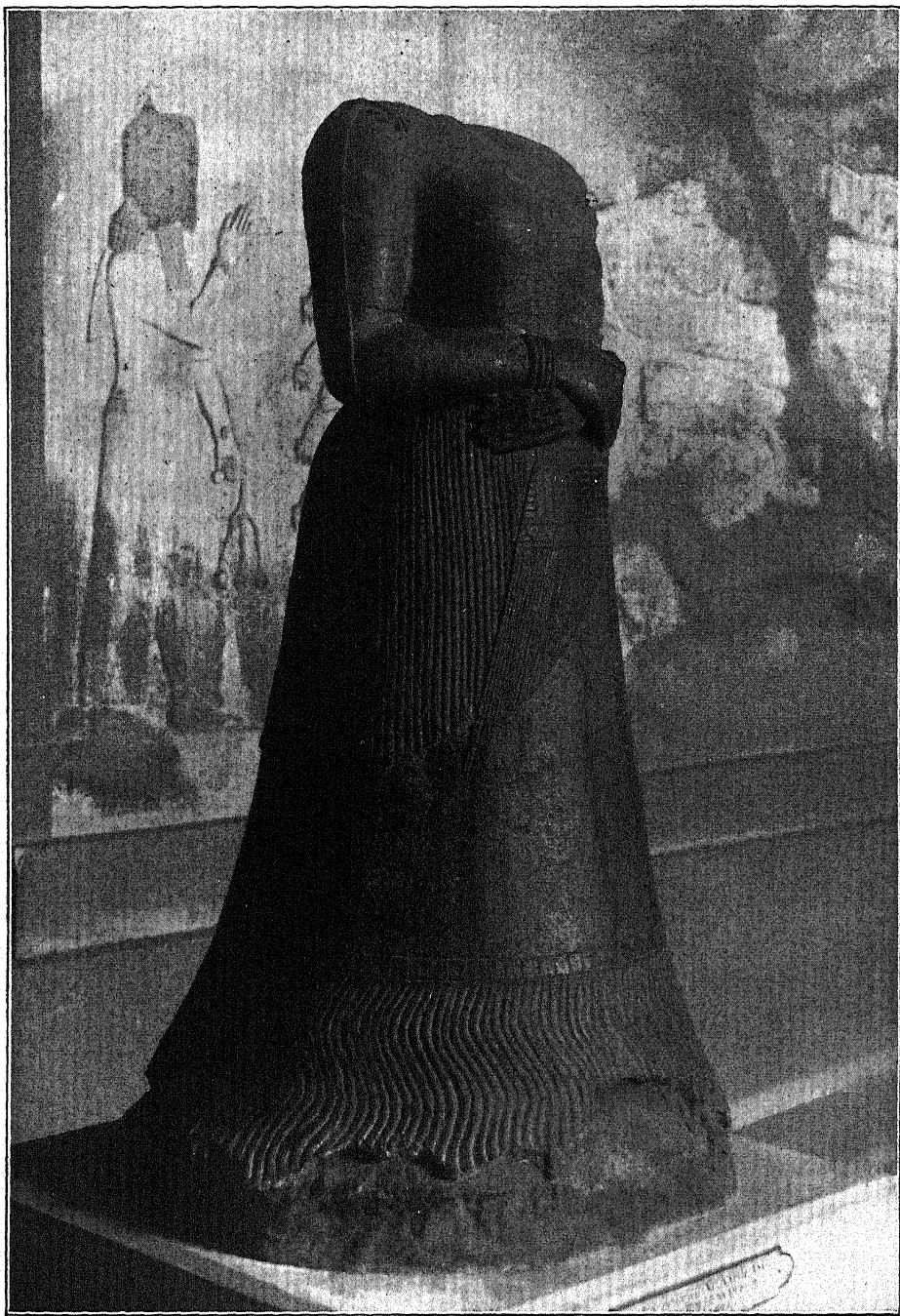


FIG. 266.—Bronze statue of Napir-Asu, wife of Ountash-Gal, King of Elam (1500 B.C.). This portion is four feet three inches high and weighs two tons. Cast by the "cire perdue" process. Found at Susa. Louvre.

other primitive races, regarded their kings as gods, and had been accustomed to venerate their gods under the form of tree trunks and pillars of stone. In their eyes, therefore, the statue was primarily a sacred block of stone, the carving of a head and limbs upon it was mere decoration and of quite secondary importance. This opens up the whole question of the evolution of sacred images, and had better be discussed later on.

In the treatment of draped statues the Chaldean showed much promise. There are no signs in Egyptian work of development in this direction. The bronze statue (Fig. 266) of Napir-Asou, the wife of a king of Elam, is a very fine example of this treatment at a much later period; but it is too isolated a specimen to afford a basis for judging of the general progress of art. Nearly a thousand years separate it from Gudea's time, and it has no parallel in later times for nearly another thousand years. It is an extraordinary piece of work, and its survival is so strange that it is worth making a digression to give a sketch of its adventures.

At the sack of cities bronze statues were usually broken up by looting soldiers for the sake of the metal; but the followers of Assurbanipul in 650 B.C. seem to have found this statue too massive, and they were only able to break off the head. Having escaped destruction at their hands it was buried deep enough by accumulated ruins to preserve it safely for two thousand five hundred years from casual fossickers.

When M. de Morgan's men had dug it up and had conveyed it many weary miles to the side of the river Karun for transportation to France, the tackle suddenly gave way, and it rolled down the river bank into the

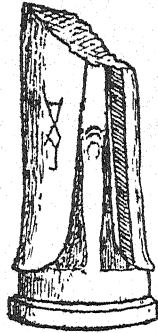


FIG. 267.—Fragment of dark green steatite statuette of robed figure. Gudea's period. Half actual size.

water. Some of the pools in that stream are very deep, and it might have been impossible to recover it; but, with its usual luck, the statue came to rest at the edge of a deep hole, and now has found a safe home in the Louvre Museum.

Another remarkable arrangement of drapery for such an early period is to be seen in a fragment of a statuette of Gudea's time (Fig. 267). That parting of the robe to show the lower leg is also seen in many profile figures on Chaldean seals, but this is the only instance of it in the round.

Equally surprising is the sculptured band of nymphs round a fountain basin from Gudea's palace (Fig. 268). It is unfortunately in a very poor state of preservation; but there is no mistaking the grace, almost the abandon, of their posture.

Not many relief sculptures have yet been found definitely assignable to this period. Among them, however, we again see signs of that inclination to depict certain gods and goddesses either wholly in full face (Fig. 269) or in that peculiar position we have already noticed, the body in profile and the head

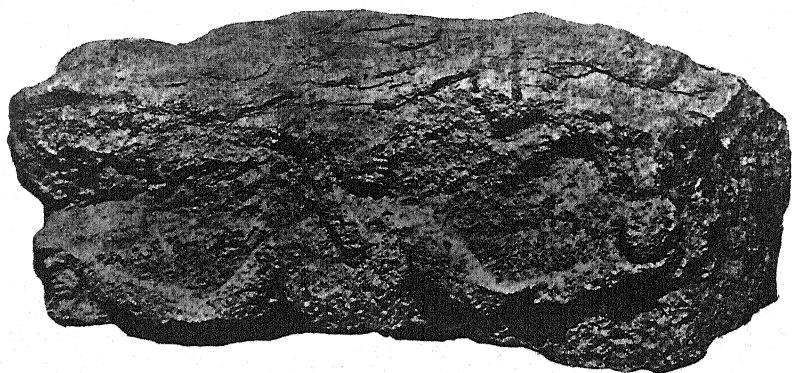


FIG. 268.—Fragment of the edge of a water-basin from the platform in front of the palace at Tello. Limestone. About sixteen inches long. Louvre.



FIG. 269.—White limestone relief of a female figure holding a vase (similar to that in Fig. 268) from which flows streams of water. She is recognised as a goddess by the head-dress with horns on each side. It is possible that she is not wholly full face but in the same position as the god in Fig. 270, for the arm of a throne seems to be showing below the vase. Height about eleven inches. Constantinople.



FIG. 270.—Relief of the god Nin-Ghirsu. It is of porous limestone and in bad preservation, but a study of the original shows it to have been well modelled and of finished workmanship. Height seventeen inches. Louvre.



FIG. 271.—Alabaster relief, damaged by fire. It is supposed to represent the goddess Bau sitting on the knees of her husband, Nin-Ghirsu. Height four and a half inches. Louvre.

showing the full face (Fig. 270). A very strange composition is shown in Fig. 271 where a full-face goddess is seated on the lap of a god. Such a grouping is exceedingly rare. It occurs in a very indistinct form on a glazed quartz mace head of the earliest Egyptian dynasties (now in the Ashmolean Museum), and again on a relief representing Akhenaten and his wife. The first of these examples being far older than the relief, and the second being much more recent, it would be rash to attempt to form any theories about the origin of this art motive.

These isolated specimens awaken keen regret that so few efforts have been made to extend the area of exploration and thus increase our knowledge of this critical period. Such works of art must have had many predecessors and probably some successors. Where are they now? Are they buried beneath those heaps of mud rising parched and desolate above the ruined plains? Or have they, like the statues of the Parthenon, been burnt for lime by the devastating Turk?

Buried or cremated their spirit still lives. The bold attempts and patient strivings of those ancient artists cannot have been in vain. We are not able to trace the steps, but it seems fairly certain that even the Greeks, and through the Greeks all modern artists, have felt the influence of that Sumerian grace which, wedded to Semitic vigour, produced so many realisations in stone and bronze of vague artistic dreams of strength and beauty.

CHAPTER XII

DISCOVERIES IN CRETE

PALÆOLITHIC art perished, we know not how. Egyptian art was buried alive, stifled and swathed in the mummy bands of priestly greed. The living body of Chaldean art was slowly turned to stone, cold, grim, unfeeling; all its humanity perishing in the hard struggle first for material prosperity and then against barbarian robbers. Having by honest work transformed a marshy swamp into an earthly paradise, the people were beguiled to taste forbidden fruit. The serpent lust of easy acquisition led them to prey upon their weaker neighbours, and no doubt it was their women who told them it was good. Then came the destroying angel of retaliation, and the gates of a possible artistic paradise were closed to them for ever.

Perhaps it is not quite fair to take the Semitic legend of the fall of man as indicating also the part played by woman in the drama of Mesopotamian history. It is very difficult to estimate her influence in those ancient times. The story is complicated by the presence of the two different races, the Sumerian and the Semitic, with two different tendencies in their attitude towards woman; the one apparently idealising

her as a source of goodness in its widest sense, the other regarding her as a temptress whose power should be restrained as much as possible. From this mixture of ideas we get that strange phenomenon of woman being worshipped as a goddess and treated as a chattel or a slave.

These conflicting tendencies appear again in many different ages. The contest of the Greeks against the Amazons might possibly be taken as a symbolic rendering of the perennial struggle. In later times the extravagances of the knight's devotion and of the ascetic's renunciation are phases of the same uncertainty. When shall we cease to oscillate between these two extremes and recognise that woman is no better and no worse than man, though so widely different in her aims and methods that it is difficult to find any standard of comparison? ^{45a}

The future of each nation depends on its measure of success in solving the great problem of her proper sphere and work. "Crushed in the east, toy sceptred in the west," she has never yet had a fair chance. To exact from her too much work and subservience results in that economic and mental stagnation which is all too common in the east. But a sexless type, unable or unwilling to bear the burden of motherhood, seems to be produced by those social conditions which allow her to have perfect independence without the obligation to fulfil any duties. Such conditions can only arise in a wealthy and dominant class. When more careful study has been

given to the social and economic conditions of nations during their decline, I think we shall find that the failure of the dominant classes to produce healthy and sufficient progeny was one of the chief causes of their downfall. A coarser and more ignorant, but sexually more efficient class takes their place in spite of their individually courageous struggles; art and literature become decadent, and from the crest of its intellectual wave the nation sinks into a depression which may engulf it, and from which no nation seems to have been able to emerge unscathed.⁴⁶

The centre and perhaps culminating point of this worship of the female seems to have been somewhere in the Mediterranean region. The pages of unwritten history are so mutilated and deficient that it is not possible to tell a well-connected tale, although to those scanty records there have recently been made most wonderful additions which will greatly help students of sociology and of comparative religion. Many of these additions have been due to the extensive researches in Crete undertaken by Sir Arthur Evans. A large gap in our knowledge of the past has been well filled up by his brilliant discoveries of a vanished civilisation, the existence of which was barely suspected thirty years ago.

As early as 1883 Dr. Milchhöfer had indeed prophesied in his *Anfänge der Kunst in Griechenland* (p. 127) that much of the work supposed to have been done by Myceneans would be found to have really come from Crete, but the learned world was

then ruled by literary men, and they had an unfounded prejudice in favour of Greece. They had also been rather dazzled by Dr. Schliemann's splendid discoveries and did not realise that his deductions were quite as unscientific as his methods of excavation.

Also M. Edmond Pottier, the learned Conservator of the Oriental Antiquities in the Louvre, when referring in his *Catalogue des Vases Antiques* (1896, vol. i. p. 199) to the strange fragments of pottery then called Mycenaean, suggested Crete as being possibly their real source, although in his wonderfully clear-sighted forecast of the revelations likely to be made by future discoveries he left Crete out of the question and accepted the usual view that Greece must have been the centre of that unknown civilisation, which had left such scanty and such puzzling relics. Thus in page 38 of that very interesting Catalogue he said: "If all this pottery had been exported from a single centre, its diffusion shows clearly that it must have been produced by a maritime commercial race, seeking a market in all the surrounding regions. . . . We are led to descry, beyond the Homeric age and long before the legendary Trojan war, a Greece provided with active workshops, bold navigators, commercial settlements—in a word with a complete civilisation. This is confirmed by the following facts, according to which we ought to consider the Homeric age, not as the beginning but as the end of a definite social stage."

Until the end of the nineteenth century the political conditions of Crete were not favourable to

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Until the end of the nineteenth century the political conditions of Crete were not favourable to

archæological research, but a number of interesting finds had been made, and they encouraged Sir Arthur Evans to bide his time. Meanwhile he gradually and cautiously bought up the fields beneath which had been found traces of the city of Knossos, the ancient capital of dread King Minos, and the legendary site of that mysterious labyrinth, the hiding-place of the child-devouring Minotaur.⁴⁷

Not until 1900 did his patience and foresight have their reward, but since then every year has revealed fresh secrets of the history of a long forgotten race. Americans and Italians have also done good work in the island, and now the progress of its civilisation and especially of its art can be traced from the very beginning.

It would take up too much space to give even a short account of the various explorations. Professor Burrows has given a scientific description of them in his *Discoveries in Crete* (1907), and Sir Arthur Evans is preparing a well-illustrated volume on the subject. This book has been anxiously looked forward to for some time, as hitherto no good illustrations have been obtainable of many of the best frescoes and reliefs. A number of excellent models and drawings and a few original specimens are to be seen in the Ashmolean Museum at Oxford, but nearly all the finds are preserved in the Candia Museum in Crete.

It is a great thing to have rescued such treasures from oblivion, but even archæological and artistic

treasures bring with them that feeling of anxiety and insecurity which is one of the many curses of wealth. If war should sweep over such towns as Athens, Cairo, Constantinople, or Candia, or if violent upheavals should take place in the more settled countries of Europe, what irreparable losses might we suffer! We should then regret that these secrets had ever been wrung from the bosom of mother earth by children whose brethren were unworthy of the grand trust confided to their care. The pursuit of knowledge for its own sake has become a matter of national and international importance, and now every civilised nation has its missions for extending our knowledge of the past. This gives us a faint hope that means may be found to bind nations more closely together in spite of the conflicting interests of their commercial magnates. Artists and archæologists, together with other specialists, are inclined to neglect or even to despise politics and political economy. Inordinate one-sided development is fatal to the health of the human body; is there no fear that ill-balanced specialisation may tend to endanger the safety of things that are so dear to specialists?

The result of their labours in the last decade has been that we can now regard Mediterranean art as a distinct entity. Its centre can provisionally be fixed in Crete, and its influence is known to have extended all over the Ægean Sea and the greater part of Greece; eastwards to the shores of Asia Minor, but chiefly westwards and as far as Spain.

Digging down far below the now famous first and second palaces of Knossos, Sir Arthur Evans found vestiges of the hearths and homes of a neolithic race whose civilisation may have been of earlier date than that of Egypt. Before this point can be settled, much more extensive excavations will have to be made in both countries.

Security is a very necessary condition for good growth. By its comparative inaccessibility Crete had that condition in a greater degree than even Elam or Egypt. Its inhabitants also learned to be masters of their destiny by dominating the forces of the sea. Thus too they laid the foundations for that wealth which was to be one of the sources of their glory and the great cause of their destruction.

At a very early period they began to manufacture pottery, and having no dread of the great water, they were able to carry this and other products to distant lands, and to make profitable exchanges with foreign nations. In many Egyptian graves of predynastic and early dynastic times, explorers have found one or two vases of a special sort of ware, sometimes called buchero (Fig. 86). Being so different from all other Egyptian work of that period they have always been considered as importations. Now the discovery of a large amount of very similar ware in the neolithic deposits at Knossos gives a clue to their origin, and affords a basis for calculating the age of those deposits.

It is rather strange that the Egyptians should

apparently never have made this pottery for themselves. This dark or black buchero ware, having incised patterns filled with a white substance, seems to have been produced during their neolithic stage of development by many different races, and in lands as far apart as Elam and Peru. If it could be proved that such ware was never made in Egypt, it might help to show that the Egyptians had passed through a part of their neolithic stage in some other land.

The designs incised on this ware are in all countries very similar, being chiefly composed of zigzags and triangles; curved lines are seldom found. In southern lands the shapes are often derived from gourds (Fig. 272), while in northern countries they are more like the common forms of leather or basket work (Fig. 222 *bis*, see also p. 157).

In Crete, at about the end of the stone period, this system of incising the design was given up in favour of painting the ware with white lines on a dark polished surface. This smooth surface was obtained by coating the rough pottery with liquid clay and afterwards polishing it by hand. Glazing does not

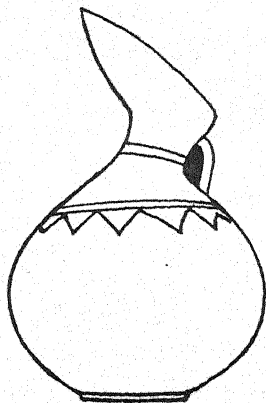


FIG. 272.—Jug with the body of a gourd and spout like a bird's beak, a very common form in the earlier ware of Crete, Troy, and the whole Aegean district. In this specimen the pattern was simply incised with some pointed instrument on the dark coloured clay. Found at Phylakopi (in the island of Melos). Height eight inches.

seem to have been used at that time in Crete, although it may have been known in Egypt and Chaldea. The stages of the early development of pottery are similar in all countries, but sufficient data are not yet available for making exact generalisations. Dr. Wosinsky, in his special work on this subject (*Die incrustierte Keramik*, 1904), says that he thinks the white filling was generally an imitation of painting, but may have preceded it in some countries. Most archaeologists consider that this white filling always came first.

The neolithic deposit at Knossos is more than twenty-four feet thick, so that probably it took some thousands of years to form; but at present it is not possible to make any accurate estimate of its age. The deposits just above the neolithic show a retrogression in the potter's art, a deterioration similar to that observed in Egypt towards the end of its neolithic period; unfortunately there are no grounds for even guessing at its cause. All that is known is that when these strata began to be formed copper had come into more general use. Accordingly this has been taken as the starting-point of the next age, which Sir Arthur Evans has appropriately called the Minoan, a convenient term which seems likely to be accepted for the whole region influenced by Cretan civilisation.

Being a seafaring race, and apparently akin to the old non-semitic inhabitants of Egypt, the Cretans probably had frequent communication with that country, especially as sellers of olive oil and of the

murex shellfish for making purple dye. This would account for their many similarities of habit, as well as for their rapid development after they had once reached a certain point.

Egypt had attained a high culture, while the Cretans and the people of the isles were still rude sailor men, but the deadening influence of mere agricultural pursuits in a monotonous land with an unvarying climate had made its inhabitants passive slaves to priests and kings.⁴⁸ On the other hand, in the Ægean, a constant contact with nature in all her changing moods had inspired these toilers of the sea with an independence of thought and a disdain for control by incapables. This gave the keynote to their lives, and was soon re-echoed in their art.

The forms of their pottery had long been distinguished by a certain natural grace and simplicity, such measure of beauty as we find in the shape of a boat or of anything evolved with singleness of pur-

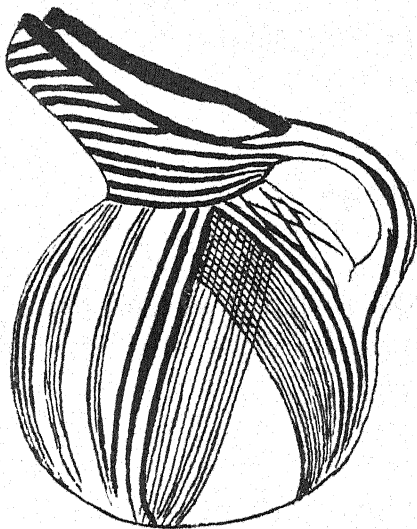


FIG. 273.—Another form of beaked jug, decorated with dark red lines painted on the light coloured clay surface. Early Minoan. Found at Phaistos. Height nine inches.

pose, and not as a compromise or a makeshift. After the first degeneration which, in Crete, just as in other lands, seems to have followed the change from stone implements to copper or to bronze, these forms appear again and attain still greater perfection, although their makers did not use the potter's wheel (Fig. 273). The designs are very simple, merely a few straight lines in red or orange on a pale yellow ground.

This copper period, which is called Early Minoan by Sir Arthur Evans, is roughly synchronous with that of the Egyptian pyramid builders.

The best development of Cretan art was in the next period, the Middle Minoan, which lasted until the twelfth Egyptian dynasty had passed away. Bronze replaced the softer copper, and the potter's wheel and furnace came into general use. Wealth had so increased that palaces were built at Phaistos and at Knossos, but they had nothing in common with the gloomy strongholds of the rulers of other countries, for they had few or no defensive works. They had magnificently broad flights of steps, and wide open spaces where crowds of people could freely move about, or assemble to witness dangerous sports and feats of skill.

The difference between the life of this people and of those in other lands is so striking that Senator Mosso, in his *Palaces of Crete*, even talks about their socialism. It could, however, have been only partial, for real socialism would require a far higher organisation than was possible in those days, when the diffi-





FIG. 274.—Disk of baked clay found by the Italian mission at Phaistos. Various interpretations of it have been made, but until a fairly long inscription has been found written in this and in some known language, it does not seem likely that any interpretation could be trustworthy. Similar figures are stamped on the other side of the disk. It is about six inches in diameter and five-eighths inch thick. A facsimile is in the first vase-room of the British Museum, together with reproductions of various other Cretan and Mycenæan specimens.

culties of communication made special individual efforts more necessary and effective than they are in crowded and complex communities.

Tradition says that they suppressed piracy, but probably they themselves were not averse from making an honest living occasionally by robbery. Aristotle, living more than a thousand years later, saw no objection to it. And even now do we despise all forms of robbery? Carlyle asserted that any man or woman who does no work is either a beggar or a thief, and theoretically we confess that he is right; yet there are many idle ones who feel no shame, but rather pride themselves on being independent of the necessity for doing any work.

While in these centuries Egyptian art became stereotyped and devoted chiefly to the commemoration of its rulers, and to providing the wealthy with a chance of life beyond and within the tomb, Ægean art rejoiced in freedom, and gave no anxious thought to gloomy myths. Not that these Mediterranean folk were irreligious, or had no conception of a future life. The reverent care with which they treated the dead disproves that.

Before long we may be able to read their writing, and thus to learn what they themselves said on the subject. Thousands of tablets have been found inscribed with well-formed characters; a few have pictographic inscriptions. This round tablet found at Phaistos in 1909 is unique (Fig. 274). The characters were not drawn, each little picture was im-

pressed by its own special seal. This shows that probably it was a very common form of writing, therefore in time we may expect to find many more specimens. Judging by the head-dress on one of the characters (Fig. 275), the writing was used by a



FIG. 275.—Head from Egyptian relief at Medinet-Abu (1200 B.C.) showing the classical straight-nosed type, usually called "Greek" but apparently a common type in the Ægean long before Greek times.

people having affinities with the "strangers from the islands of the west" represented in that Egyptian relief at Medinet-Abu (Fig. 191).

It is unfortunate that these tablets did not receive the same treatment as the Chaldean ones, which were systematically fired soon after being written. Cretan tablets were only sun dried, and most of them must have

long ago returned to shapeless earth. At Knossos, however, a large number were found baked as hard as brick. Here is another instance of our profiting by ancient catastrophes. They were baked by a great conflagration in which the palace and nearly all its other treasures were destroyed.

As regards religion, the Cretans seem to have had a higher ideal than the Egyptians. There are no signs of cringing before a vengeful deity, or of propitiating him by cruel slaughters of those who

worshipped other gods. In the neolithic stage they had the usual idols, strange uncouth forms (Fig. 276), that may seem to us mere travesties of deity, formless conceptions with no idea of nobleness or grace. But is that judgment just? Religion when it is young is not content with mere abstractions, it desires some concrete form for its devotions. The worship is not given to the form, but to the ideal it represents. The underlying meaning of the glyptic and pictorial representations of divinity are too subtle to be considered here, but no artist can ignore them altogether.

Looking at the question from a purely artistic point of view, I think we may find that the ordinary conditions of life had a decided influence on their evolution. We noticed before that the absence of statuettes of human form from the later palæolithic deposits may have been due to the more frequent use of clothing as the climate became more rigorous. Sculptors would then have had more difficulty, and less satisfaction in representing the human form covered with the rough garments of those days. Therefore that branch of art lay dormant for very many centuries. We also noticed how in Chaldean times the wearing of a heavy skirt seems to have killed all study of the lower limbs, attention being concentrated chiefly on the head and shoulders.

In the Mediterranean region the difficulty was sometimes avoided by purposely omitting the lower

parts (Fig. 276), or by giving the figures a squatting position, with the legs doubled up underneath. This posture is more clearly represented in a statuette

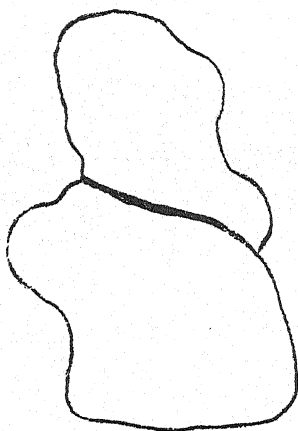


FIG. 276.—Image of unbacked clay found at Phaistos in pre-Minoan strata. A similar ("steatopygous") development of fat in the gluteal regions is to be noticed in palæolithic and Egyptian images, and among the Bushmen and Hottentot women of the present day. The head is missing. Actual size.

from Adalia (Lycia) (Fig. 277). No very distinct examples of this treatment have yet been found, but archæologists seem to have no doubt that it was an attempt to portray a posture which may have been considered very dignified in regions where chairs were still unknown.

There is another important difference between these statuettes and the palæolithic ones. Most of the Mediterranean pre-Minoan statuettes are clothed, and as might be expected in those temperate climes, the clothing is thin, almost transparent, the navel generally being clearly indicated. In

colder countries the clothing became more and more accentuated, as barbaric artificial adornment (Fig. 278) attracted the attention of artists more than the beauties of the natural form, which they seldom or never saw. In the southern region the reverse took place, and ultimately clothing was for certain statues discarded altogether.



a



b



c

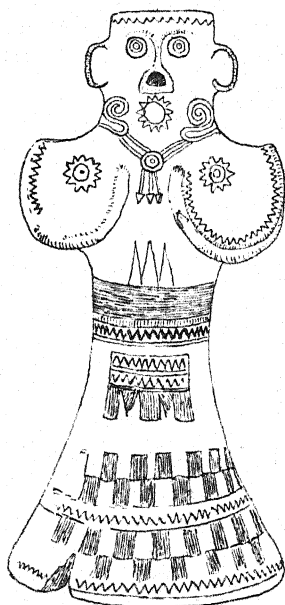
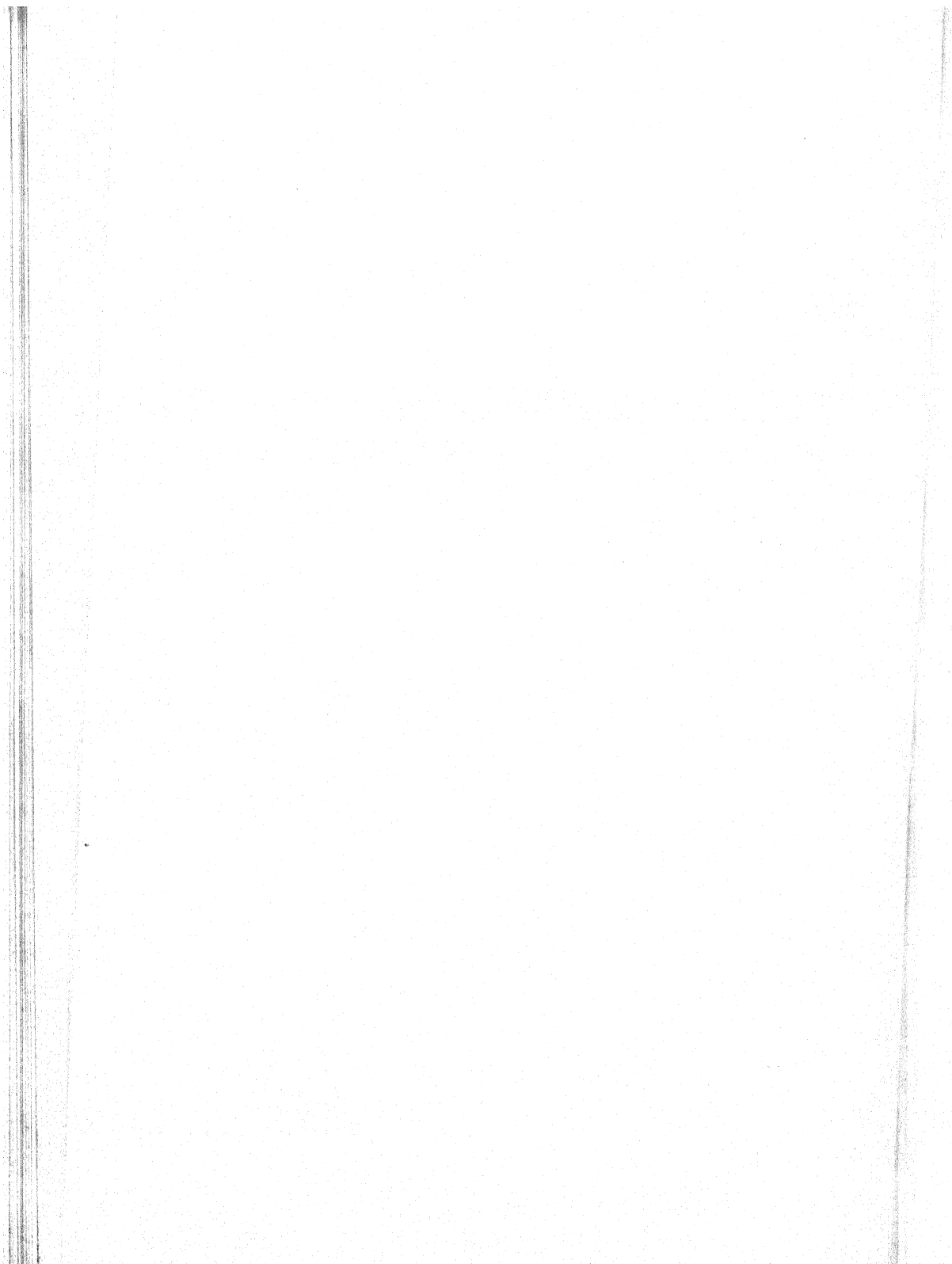


FIG. 277.—Small figurine of dark clay. The incised lines are filled with a white chalky substance. Notice the size of the eyes. The absence of the mouth is a curious characteristic of nearly

FIG. 278.—Large clay figurine found at Klicevac, near Belgrade. It is supposed by Prof. Hoernes to date from the second millennium B.C., but it is difficult to



The series of neolithic idols is at present a very small one, and it is hard to trace their development into the nude figurines (Fig. 279), or into those queer schematic shapes called "violin" idols (Fig. 280), both of which are so abundant in all this Ægean region throughout the whole Minoan period.

It is harder still to account for this very inartistic treatment of the human form, representing a divinity, at a time when artists were evidently capable of better work. The natural conservatism of all religions seems hardly a sufficient cause. May it not have been due to a reluctance to give too realistic a form to the concrete image, a reluctance which would naturally become greater in proportion as the ideal became more vague and spiritual? In Christian art the same feeling is noticeable with regard to representations of the persons of the Trinity. Representations

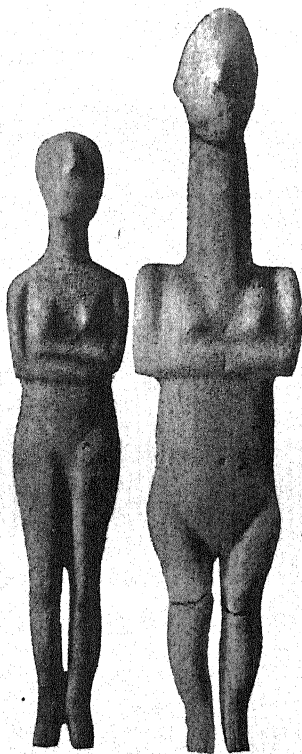


FIG. 279.--Flat figures generally made of marble. They are often called Amorgos idols as they were found in abundance in the tombs of the island. They are probably not idols but protectors or companions of the dead. They vary very much in size. These specimens came from the Cyclades islands and are ten and twelve inches high. In the Ashmolean Museum there is a specimen two feet in height.

of the Holy Ghost in human form have seldom been attempted, and such pictures of the Father have become much more rare in modern times.

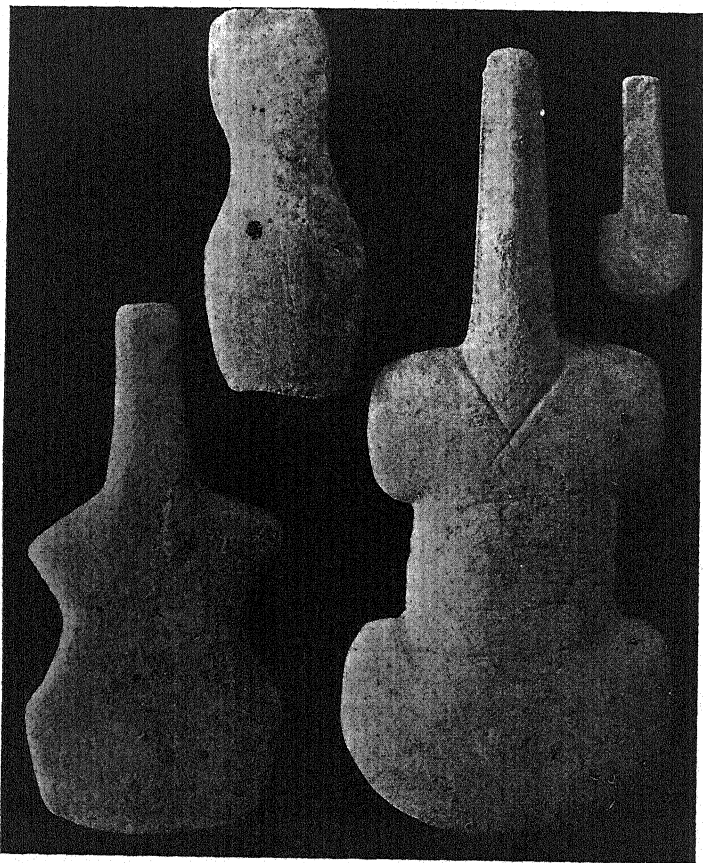
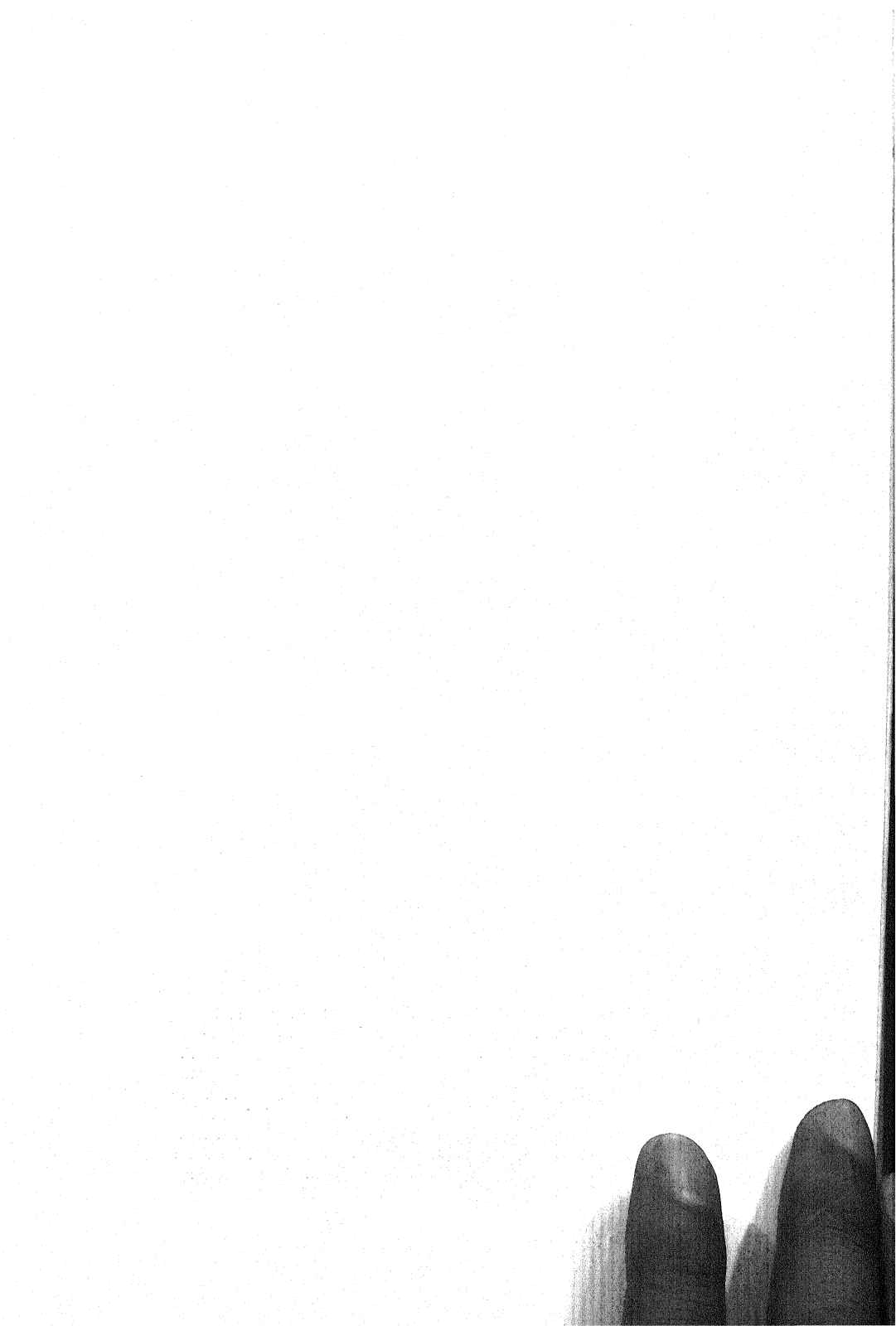


FIG. 280.—Marble "violin idols" from the Cyclades. About five-sixths actual size. See Dörpfeld's *Troja und Ilion* (1902), pp. 379-381.

In this way we may perhaps account for these two contrary currents in the artistic development of



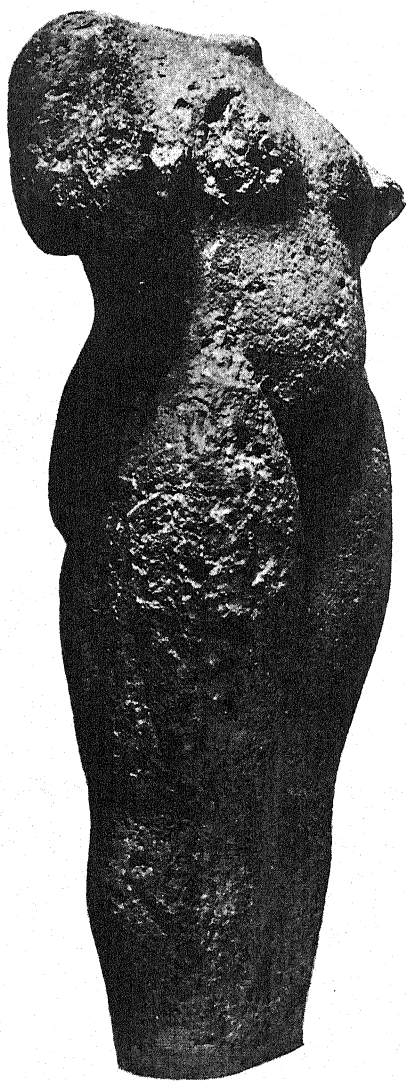


FIG. 281.—Part of a nearly life-size statue found at Kouyunjik, the large mound which covers the site of Nineveh. No record seems to have been kept of the exact locality, but it was possibly in one of the palaces. The statue may, of course, be of more remote date than the king Ashur-bel-kala, whose names, titles, and genealogy are inscribed on its back, but it will not be of later date, because the name of a king who had long been dead would not be inscribed on a statue. British Museum.

forms expressing reverence for a great mother goddess, the attempted embodiment of many ideals—of fruitfulness, of protection, of consolation, perhaps even of gentleness and grace. To one class of mind a strange symbol would appeal, and appeal all the more strongly if it diverged from any other familiar shape. Another class would look through nature up to nature's God, and would welcome in every beauteous female form a direct gift from heaven, firmly believing that when God made a perfect human body it was in His own image that He created it.

Between the end of the Minoan period (about 1200 B.C.) and the early Greek there is a most lamentable gap in our knowledge of the evolution of the nude female statue, for so few specimens have been discovered. Apart from a limited number of rough clay statuettes, and some tiny figures on Babylonian seals, we have only a few Egyptian reliefs, and this absolutely unique torso, supposed to have come from Nineveh (Fig. 281). Its date cannot be later than 1080 B.C., because the name and genealogy of Ashur-bel-kala are engraved upon it. It is the earliest known example of an undraped life-sized female statue, but it stands now neglected and forlorn amid the coarse sculptures of its Assyrian captors. A strange instance of the vicissitudes of fortune. At one time an object of reverence and devotion, possibly too the crowning glory of some famous sculptor with bold original ideas, then dragged forth from its temple and carried with the spoils of war to be exposed

to the rude gaze of people debased by tyranny and rapine; exhibited perhaps for centuries to an unappreciating mob as mere evidence of a successful raid; then again a helpless witness of unutterable cruelties, and of the ruthless vengeance of the Medes; torn from its pedestal, and buried beneath heaps of ruins; dug up by curio hunters who did not even trouble to record where it was found; shipped as a nameless relic to an unsympathetic land; mercifully hidden in an obscure niche from the listless gaze of careless sightseers; headless and truncated, without a title and without a history, the goddess awaits, and may await in vain, the vivifying touch of fresh discoveries which could reveal the secret of her origin.

Some day it may form an important link in the chain of evidence as to the origin of this type of statue. It represents a fairly distinct school of sculpture, which in its time must have produced many other examples, and surely they cannot all have been destroyed. It is to be hoped that before long archæologists may succeed in bridging this gap. At one time nearly all of them held that the idea of a mother goddess originated in Chaldea, and thus that country became considered as the source of the nude female statue. This belief has been strongly contested by M. Salomon Reinach. As the type was so rare in Chaldea, and so common in the Mediterranean region from the very earliest times, he considers that it really spread from there eastwards.

His theory has been greatly strengthened by



FIG. 282.—One of the best preserved of a number of ivory figures found in a small stair-cupboard in the palace of Knossos. The waist was wanting and has been supplied by wax. The left leg and part of the right arm are also wanting. It is supposed that these figures, some of which are nearly a foot in length, were suspended by fine wires as if they were vaulting over bulls (see Fig. 300).

recent discoveries, but until Syria has been properly explored, and has yielded up her secrets, the point seems likely to remain unsettled. Mention is frequently made in Babylonian and Assyrian history of the capture or destruction of statues of the goddess Nana, but in none of these passages are there any descriptions of the statues. The earliest representations of this type with any claim to artistic beauty were found in Egypt, and date from about 1400 B.C. They, however, represent either Qetesh (Fig. 200 *bis*) or the sky goddess Nut, both of whom are said to be of Syrian origin.

Looking at the question simply from the art point of view, it seems unlikely that the harsh and brutal Assyrian school should have evolved a high ideal of female beauty, and indeed no good examples of nude figures have yet been found in all that district. Therefore even if we admit that the Chaldeans had originated the idea, yet as the line of descent is broken in Assyria, we must look elsewhere for its further evolution. No nude female statues, or even passably good figurines, have yet been found in the Mediterranean region, but there are sufficient fragments of stucco reliefs and of ivory figures (Figs. 282 and 283) to show how well Ægean artists could model the human form. When the artistic capacity of the Ægeans met on Syrian soil with more developed conceptions of the female deity, it is possible that then the inspiration came to produce statues of the nude female with a form more perfect than any of

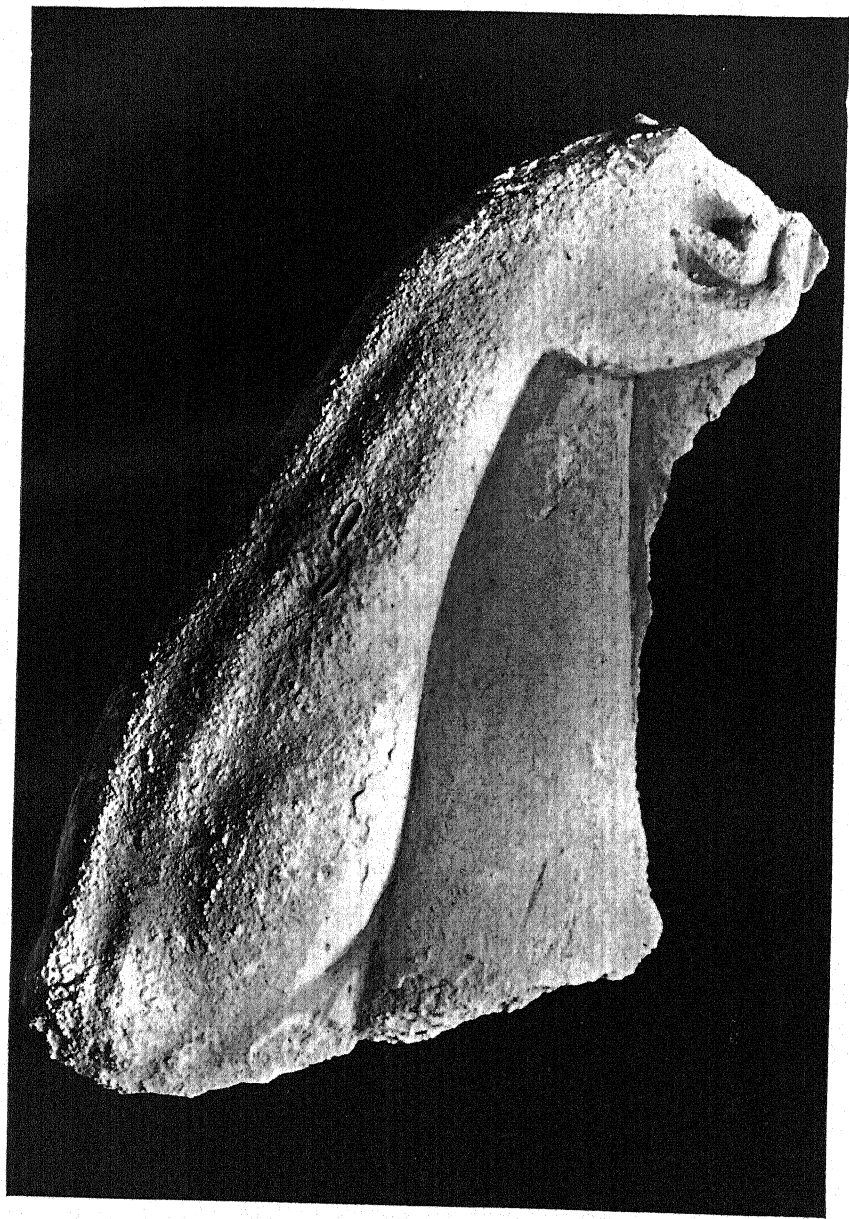
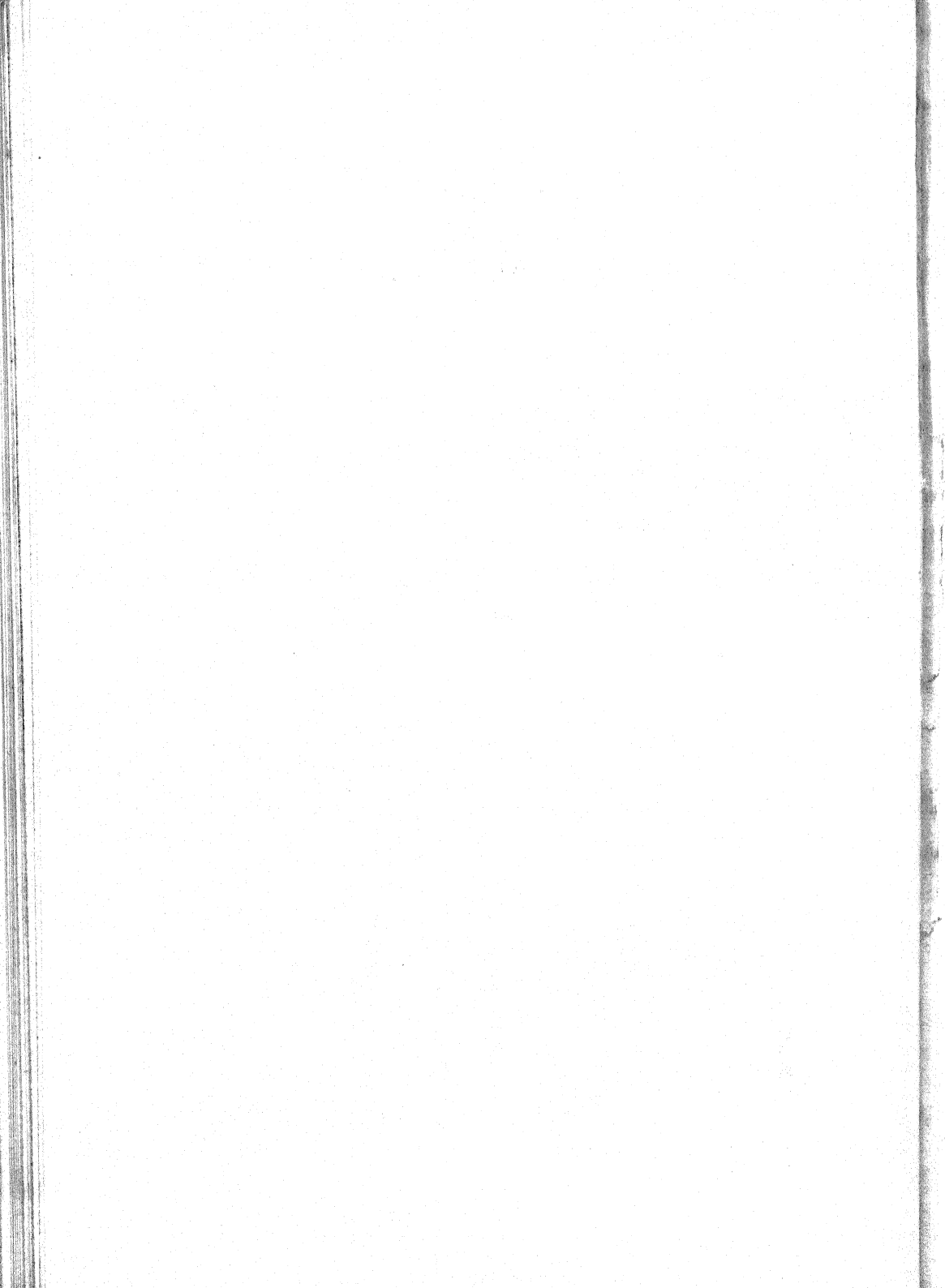


FIG. 283.—The object grasped by this hand and arm has been supposed to be a vase like that in Fig. 29-*b*, but it seems more like a bull's horn (Fig. 335). This and the other stucco relief (Fig. 284) are considered to have been made in the Late Minoan II period, and therefore roughly contemporary with the eighteenth dynasty and the Cassite Queen Napir Asu (Fig. 266). The rapid degeneration of Egyptian sculpture towards the end of the eighteenth dynasty suggests the possibility that the earlier and better work of that dynasty was due to some foreign influence—probably Cretan or Syrian.



those others with which men had previously been satisfied.

We may discard the supposition that there were any impure or lascivious ideas necessarily connected with these statues. Impure practices were no doubt at times associated with the religion which they symbolise, but that does not condemn the whole religion as impure. Horrible cruelties have been committed by Christians in the name of their religion, but that does not prove it to be a cruel faith.

Regard these statues as works of art, then it is easy to see how they may have awakened different ideas in different minds, inspiring some to worship and others to destroy. Art is the language of the emotions; it can only speak to those who understand the language. If this understanding is only acquired by a definite association of certain ideas with certain forms and colours, is it not possible that art may be like speech, and find expression in several different languages? Shall we therefore condemn those who speak a different tongue, and dare we insist that they shall only use our own?

This brings us round again to the idea that art is dependent on its environment. The artist desires to give concrete expression to his emotions, not only for his own solitary satisfaction, but also in order to communicate them to his fellow-men. How can he do that unless they can understand his language? Will not all his poetry be wasted if his poems are in an unknown tongue?

Some artists seem to think they can invent a language of their own, and they consider it beneath them to use the common tongue. Others apparently talk gibberish. Emotions may be communicated by these queer means, but have they any lasting value? As far as can be gathered from the history of art it has not progressed by sudden starts or strange devices. Like language it has been evolved. The great masters were those who seized and wielded materials ready to their hand.

CHAPTER XIII

PROGRESSIVE CRETAN ART

SIR ARTHUR EVANS' work in Crete was distinguished not only by his careful and scientific system of excavation, but also by the accuracy and comprehensiveness of his deductions. To reconstitute the history of a nation from the scarce fragments of its ruins requires imagination and insight as well as patient labour. It is not given to every explorer to combine these qualities with such happy effect that his resulting conclusions are generally accepted by the archæologists of all nations.

The period which is most interesting to artists is the Middle Minoan, when Cretan art was full of vigour and originality, and had not yet become corrupted by a desire for rapid production and display. The various stages of development cannot be traced quite so clearly as in Egypt or Chaldea, partly because there are not yet sufficient examples, partly because sculpture was not so commonly employed. Statues and reliefs furnish the best evidence of the degree of perfection attained by the art of any particular period, since they are but little liable to decay, and are more likely to be the work of good artists. Such expensive material as marble and bronze would

not generally be entrusted to inferior men. Frescoes, terra-cotta figures and vases might be, and generally were produced by copyists. Even when original they

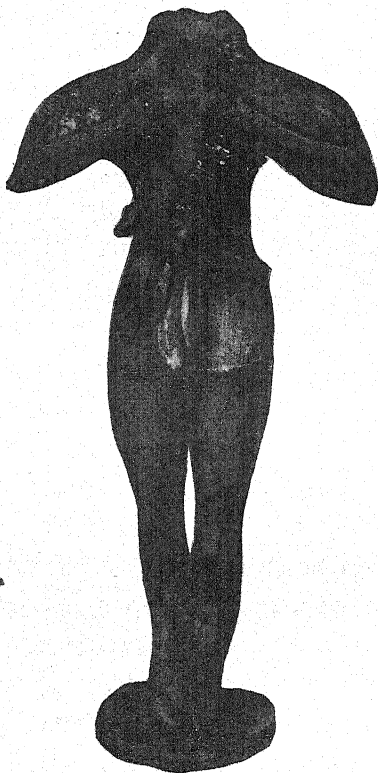


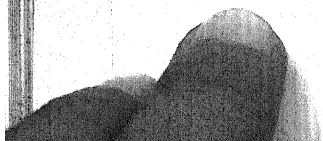
FIG. 285.—Terra cotta figure found at Petsofa, Crete. The loin cloth and foot gear are painted on the red coloured clay. Middle Minoan.

would naturally not be executed with such care and forethought as sculptures. This absence of statuary is unfortunate for us, but it shows a happier state of affairs in Crete, where art seems to have been the heritage of the people, not the monopoly of the few. Some of their best relief work was done in a sort of stucco, made of lime and pounded marble, but only fragmentary specimens have been found (Figs. 283 and 284).

How well they modelled even ordinary clay votive figures is shown by this statuette of a young man (Fig. 285), wearing a short dagger, resembling the copper ones frequently found in Early Minoan tombs. As the figure is attributed to the next period, the Middle Minoan, the shortness of the dagger may be due



FIG. 284.—Coloured stucco relief found at Knossos. Nearly life size. It has been used to make the reconstruction shown in Fig. 293. The decoration on the chest may be a string of stylised bull's heads like the bucrania amulets used in Egypt, or it may be derived from shell or other forms like those of the golden necklets found at Phaistos. (See *Mon. Antichi*, xiv. p. 599, Fig. 62).



to technical considerations. We do not yet know much about the history of these side weapons, but the young man probably used to wear rather a longer blade, for in proportion as civilisation grows weapons too increase in size or in range. It took about fifteen hundred years for these daggers to grow into the swords wherewith Minoan civilisation was destroyed

Civilisation and its results seem to move in a vast vicious circle. Civilised men invent things, and with them exploit or oppress the uncivilised. In time the uncivilised also learn how to use them, then they annihilate the civilised, and one more dark age sweeps over an unrepentant world. In our pursuit of material gain we have broken down the barriers of giant mountain ranges, and have bridged the all dividing sea; now we are learning to surmount the limits imposed by pathless space. As an ultimate result will our descendants some day see the sky black with barbarian hordes disdaining death; will that be the end of all our inventions, and of our struggles for supremacy in commerce? It is difficult to imagine how absolute defeat and universal ruin can possibly befall our highly organised communities, but unless history fails to repeat itself, some such calamity will surely swamp the artificial powers of wealthy Europe.⁴⁹

Such forebodings did not trouble the Minoans; they were probably unconscious even of the existence of the wild northern European races by whose waves of expansion their own ship of state was ultimately

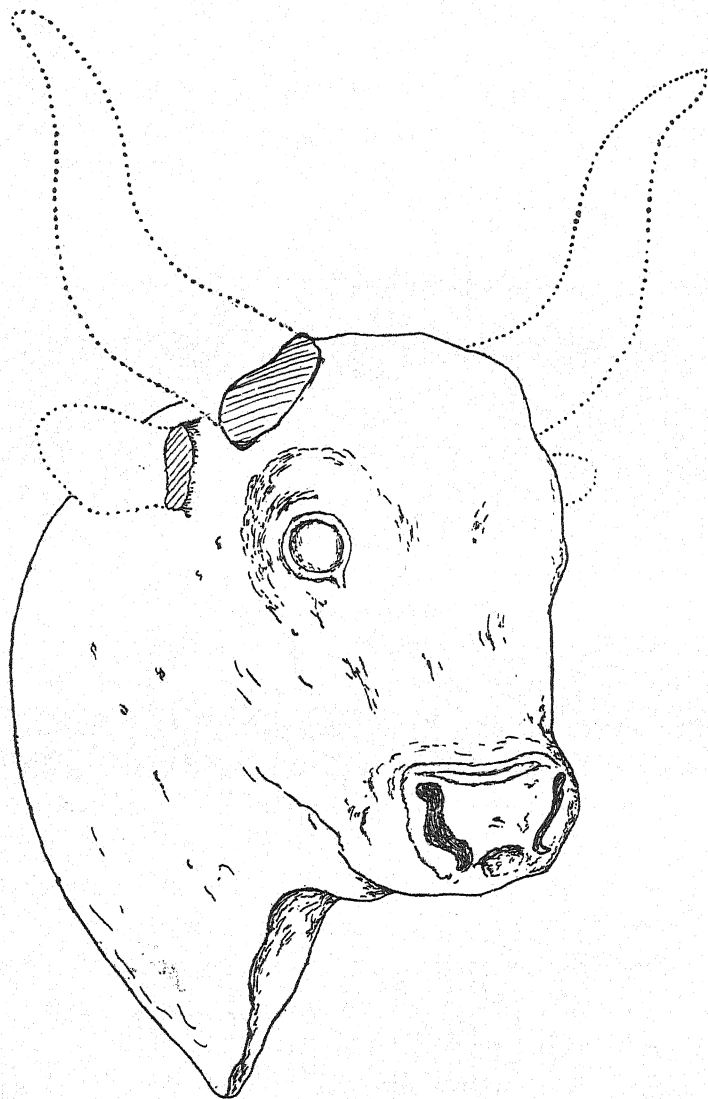


FIG. 286.—Small Rhyton (libation vase) found at Gournia by Mrs. Boyd Hawes. It is made of fine grey clay covered with a shining white slip (a paint made of clay) to imitate silver. The eye sockets are black. There are also splashes of a red pigment in places. Late Minoan I. (about 1600 B.C.). Nearly half actual size.

wrecked. They were then in the heyday of their youth, and their art tingling with life and colour bears faithful witness of their joy.



FIG. 287.—Earthenware Rhyton found in the second palace of Phaistos by Dr. Pernier (*Rendiconti della Reale Accademia dei Lincei*, vol. xiv.). About half actual size.

Here is a rendering of their ideal of force (Fig. 286), a mere bull's head indeed, but breathing conscious strength and dignity. It is free from the taint

of cruelty and oppression ; it was not to glorify some king, it was a simple vessel for pouring out libations in honour of some god. In later times there was a sad decay. Look at this head (Fig. 287), the presentment of a mask rather than of a real animal. The artist had lost touch with nature, and floundering

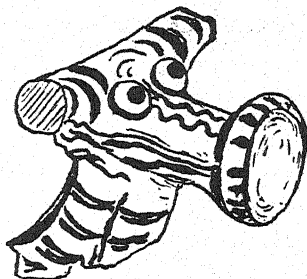


FIG. 288.—Head of a clay (probably votive) figure of a bull, found at Amyclæ, near Sparta.

in his ignorance had added useless and unmeaning lines above the eyes and nostrils. They remind us so much of the superfluity of lines in that Egyptian bull (Fig. 137) that we might suspect some connection between the art

of these two periods if they were not separated by a space of two thousand years or more. Redundancy is one of the sure signs of either the intemperance of youth or the degeneration of old age. Fondness for the superfluous will necessarily produce similar results in very different periods.

At the end of the Late Minoan the degeneration was still more apparent in the votive terra-cotta animals (Fig. 288). Perhaps it is hardly fair to judge of the general condition of art by such specimens, but they do seem to show that personal contact between craftsmen and the people had diminished. The makers no longer sought the direct appreciation of those they worked for. Commercialism had entered in ; probably such things were made impersonally in workshops

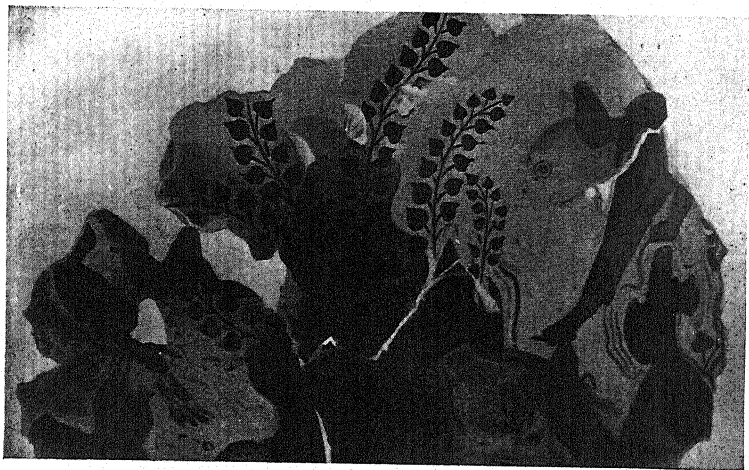


FIG. 289.—Fresco found in the ruins of a Cretan villa (Late Minoan I.) at Hagia Triada, near Phaistos. The cat is grey brown, the pheasant scarlet, the foliage light red brown, on a light buff ground. About four feet long. A rather similar cat is seen in an Egyptian tomb of twelfth dynasty, at Beni Hassan.

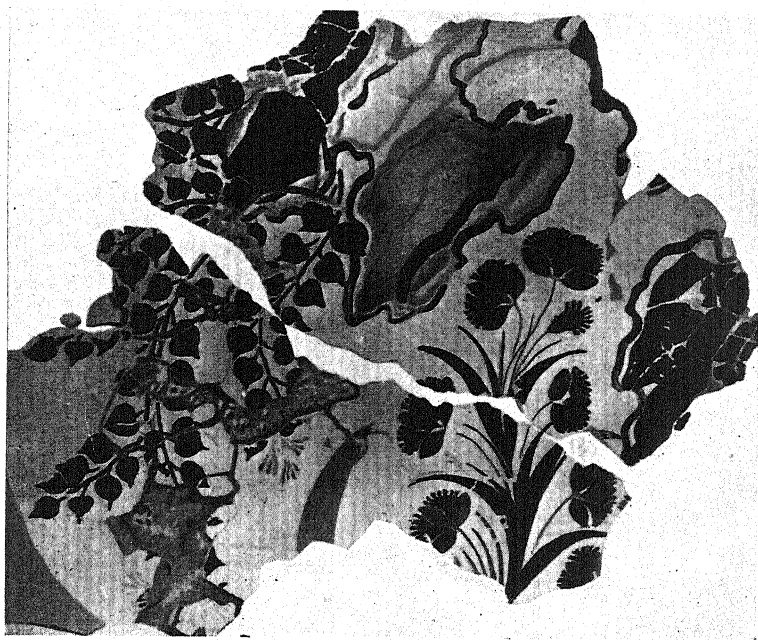


FIG. 290.—Another fragment from the same villa and coloured in the same way, with the addition of black and orange for parts of the flowers and rocks. Good coloured illustrations of these frescoes are given in *Mon. Antichi*, xiii. (1903). Tav. 8 and 9.

and inspired merely by a desire for the profit on their sale to any casual customer.

It is, however, too early now to form definite conclusions about the artistic and social development of the Ægeans. We must wait until their language is interpreted and their art productions can be arranged in a less unbroken series.

The most distinctive of these productions are the frescoes. Both in their treatment and in their subjects they are widely different from all previous work. Unfortunately we have no specimens of the early stages of this art; they nearly all belong to the Late Minoan. However clever and effective they may be, one cannot help feeling that their forerunners must have been much better (Figs. 289-295).

Crete is still full of possibilities, and perhaps some earlier paintings may be discovered, though the chances are against it. Unlike the Egyptians its inhabitants do not seem to have been under the thrall of priestly teaching with regard to the dismal fate of the unassisted dead. Although the germs of that idea are as evident in Minoan customs as in those of most other primitive societies, no tombs have yet been found elaborately furnished and painted for the use of the "doubles" of those who could pay for the necessary religious ceremonies.

The earlier paintings in dwellings would naturally be destroyed when new buildings were constructed, for sites were seldom abandoned except after great catastrophes such as volcanic eruptions. It is quite



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The earlier paintings in dwellings would naturally be destroyed when new buildings were constructed, for sites were seldom abandoned except after great catastrophes such as volcanic eruptions. It is quite

possible that towns abandoned in earlier times may yet be discovered. Indeed, one such discovery was made many years ago in that part of the island of Santorin or Thera which escaped destruction when before the dawn of history the slumbering underworld awoke and poured its raging fires into that peaceful

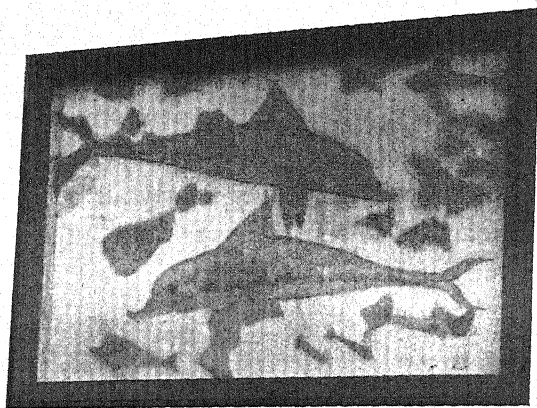


FIG. 292.—Fragments found at Knossos and now framed in the museum at Candia (Crete). The dolphins and other fish are painted with blue of various shades. The spray and bubbles flying off the tails and fins give the impression of fish seen through the glass of an aquarium. The rocks are coloured black and yellow as in Fig. 291. About five feet long.

sea. The ruins were not thoroughly examined, as the proprietor of the vineyard planted on the overlying volcanic ash demanded too high a compensation. A short time afterwards they collapsed, destroying all chance of further exploration. Some pottery and a few frescoes were brought to light, and gave rise to much controversy; now, owing to Sir Arthur Evans' discoveries, the frescoes can be recognised as dating

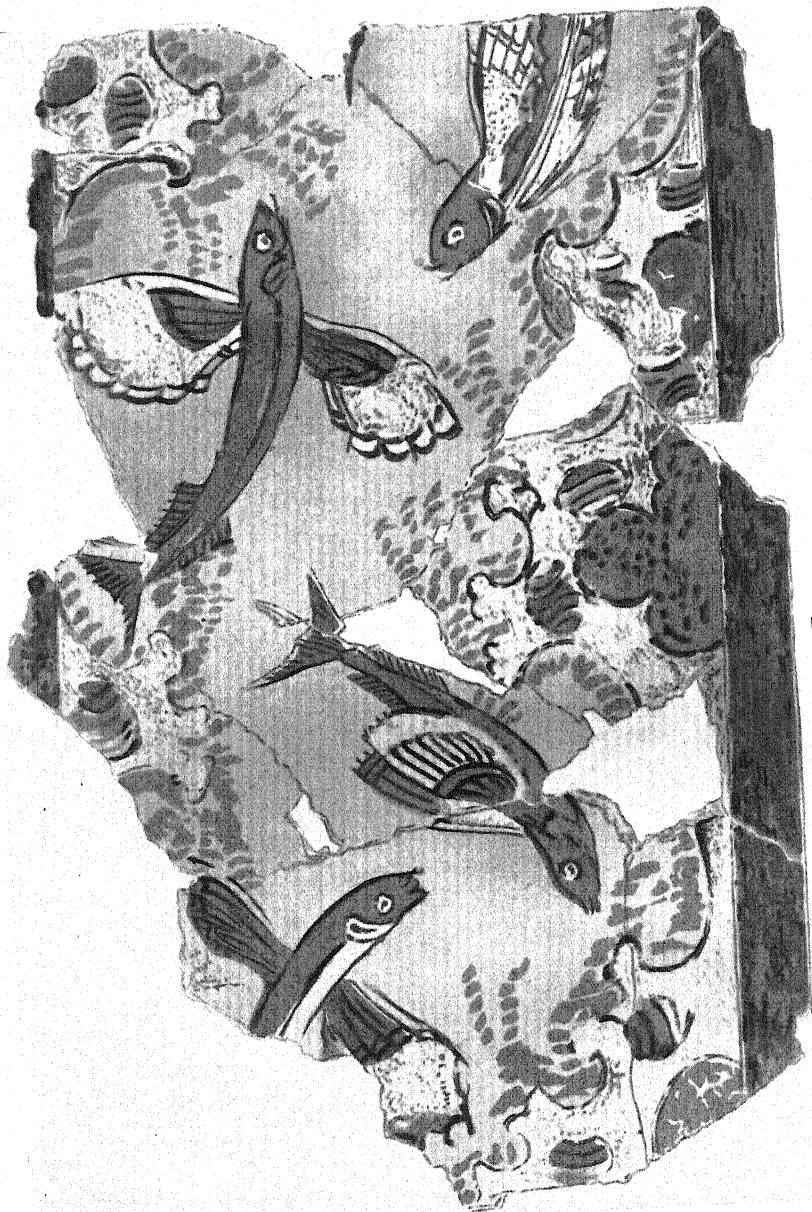


FIG. 291

PLATE XI.

FIG. 291.—Portion of a fresco (apparently a framed panel), pieced together from fragments found in a small room of a house in the second city at Phylakopi, in the island of Melos. The blue colour was rather brighter when first uncovered, and there were signs that a red colour had been used on the wings of the fish and on the conventional rocks bordering the picture. Size, about twelve inches long. Middle Minoan Period

from the Late Minoan period, and therefore do not help us much.

Minoan artists had a fairly wide range of subjects, from solemn religious functions to merely decorative

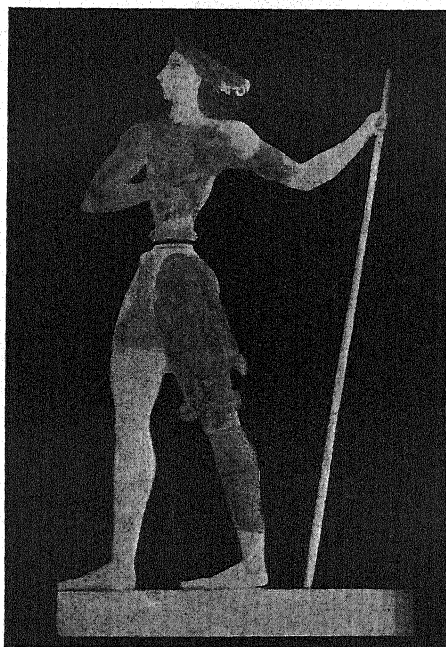


FIG. 293.—Attempted reconstruction from various coloured stucco reliefs. The lighter parts are conjectural. Life size. A facsimile is in the Ashmolean Museum.

glimpses of marine life, such as flying fish (Fig. 291) or dolphins (Fig. 292). It is perhaps strange that no pictures of their ships have yet been found nor any representations of actual fighting.⁵⁰ It is still more strange that no painting, relief, or statue records the



FIG. 294.—Fragment of painted stucco found in the second Palace of Knossos. The lips are bright crimson, the dress blue with black and red strips. Two-thirds actual size. Late Minoan I.



FIG. 295.—Fragments of stucco, probably part of the decoration of the Queen's Apartments in the Palace of Knossos. The girl's face is dull cream, her jacket is yellow with a blue and red border. She may have been one of a group of dancers, like the "choros" which Homer mentions as having been devised by Dædalus for Ariadne at Knossos, Half actual size.

memory of any man whom we might suppose to have been a leader or a king. An attempt has been made to reconstruct from various coloured stucco fragments a figure of a man who may have been a prince or king. Sir Arthur Evans has kindly allowed me to reproduce a photograph of part of it. He does not consider the head and head dress in the reconstruction accurate enough for publication (Fig. 293).

That their fresco painting was a well-established art which must have acquired a reputation for itself by many previous productions seems proved by the custom of making large painted plaster panels for transportation to distant localities. Their general style shows a certain ready facility and too often also a desire for cheap effect which reminds one of the wall painter's art still practised in many parts of Italy. This girl's head from Knossos is of that sort (Fig. 294). Its chief interest is that it dates from about four thousand years ago. The exaggerated size of the eye and of the lips shows that lack of a sense of proportion which is characteristic of inexperienced youth as well as of decrepitude. It found its worst expression in the fisherman (Fig. 318) painted in the same (L.M. I.) period. The dancing girl with widely streaming hair (Fig. 295) has the proportions that might be expected in a subject where grace was the essential quality.

A far higher type is seen in these fragments of a fresco representing a cupbearer (Fig. 296). His clear cut features and well poised attentive attitude show

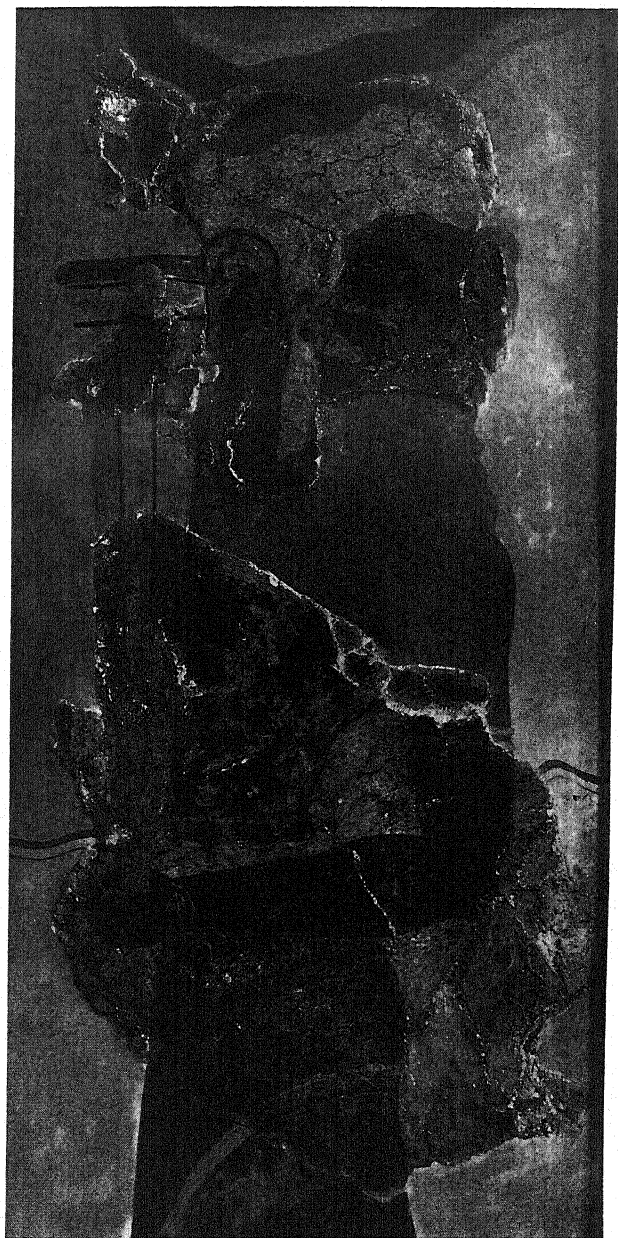


FIG. 296.—Reconstruction from fragments of a life-size fresco found at Knossos, and supposed to represent a cup bearer. No coloured illustration of it is yet available.

To face p. 358

what a high level some artists had attained. At the same time we see that such artists were unable or

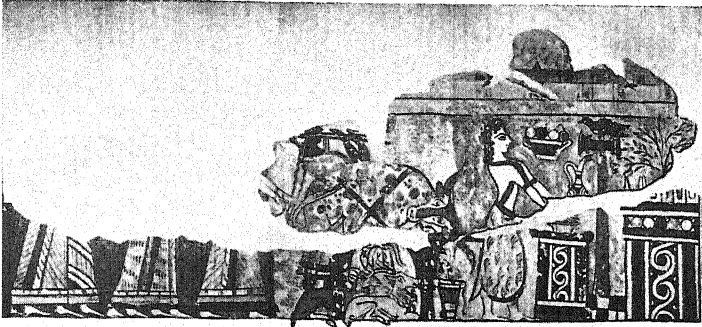


FIG. 297.—Notice that the bull's head is given in front view not in profile as in earlier Egyptian work.

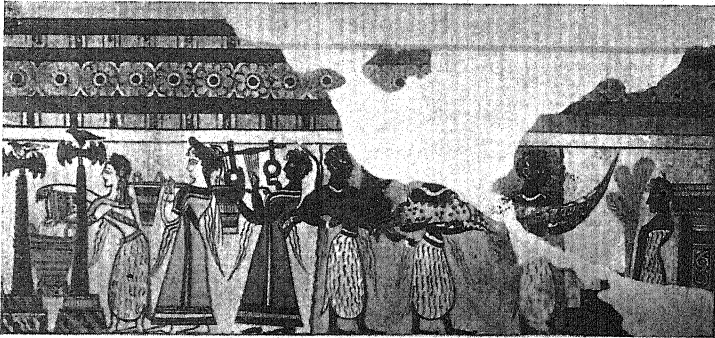


FIG. 298-a.

FIGS. 297, 298-a.—Drawings of the scenes painted on the sides of a sarcophagus (Fig. 298-b) found in the Villa at Hagia Triada. The dark figure at the end is supposed to represent the deceased standing before the door of his tomb to receive the funeral sacrifices. Women, distinguished by their white arms and faces, seem to have the largest share in this ceremonial.

unwilling to draw a profile eye. It seems an easy thing to draw ; that artists should have taken so many

thousand years to learn to do it rightly is a striking instance of the effect of custom in blinding men to truth. Otherwise their profile figures are consistent; the chest and arms are not turned round to face a different way from head and legs, as in most of the Egyptian and Assyrian work. No instances are known of any attempt to draw the human face in full instead of in profile. Apparently the greatest advance made by these Minoan painters was in the art of grouping; but this is chiefly to be inferred from the stone and metal work in relief; for only a very few and very summary sketches have yet been found among the frescoes. Of colours they used the full range, but were not fond of intermediate shades. They adopted the Egyptian convention of painting red the bare limbs of men but they left the dead white of the stucco ground to represent the fairer skin of women (Figs. 297 and 298).

Signs are not wanting that Ægean art had reached its climax by the end of the Middle Minoan period, and was ceasing to give expression to real feelings and perceptions. It was beginning to be commercial and to be the victim of that system of payment by results which is so fatal to all higher development. It is probable that this was partly due to the growing intercourse with the Hittites and the Semitic peoples in Syria and Babylonia. Then for a while luxurious Egypt attracted the attention of the Cretans. In tombs of the eighteenth dynasty we find frescoes showing the Keftiu, as they were called, carrying

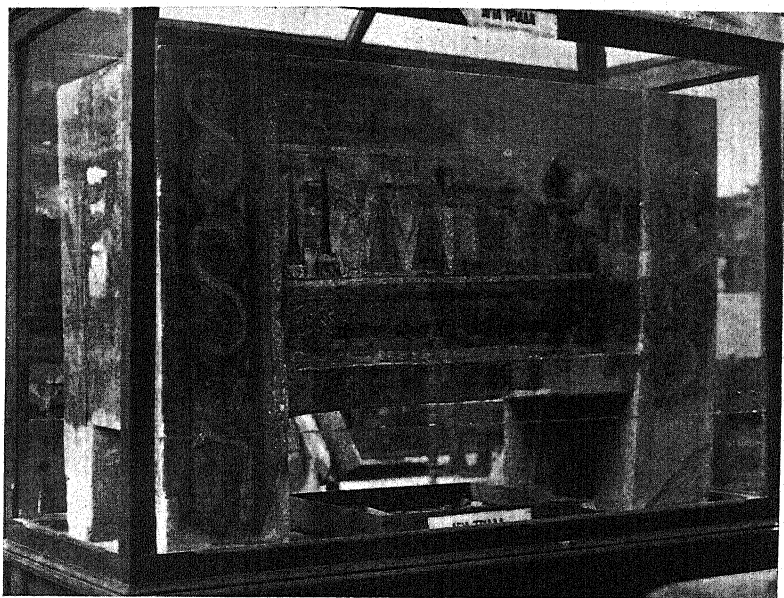


FIG. 298-*b*.—The Sarcophagus from Hagia Triada, now in the Museum at Candia. At one end is painted a chariot containing two persons and drawn by a horse; at the other end is a similar chariot drawn by a winged quadruped.



FIG. 299.—Fresco in the tomb of Senmut (about 1500 B.C.) showing the Keftiu bearing vessels of Cretan form (see Fig. 336).

To face p. 360

vases of Late Minoan form (Fig. 299).⁵¹ When Egypt had lost its power, then there came the bad influence of Mycenæ, "rich in gold," where Cretan products found a ready market.

At this time Greece was still in a very backward state ; but the Achæan princes who ruled over Mycenæ,

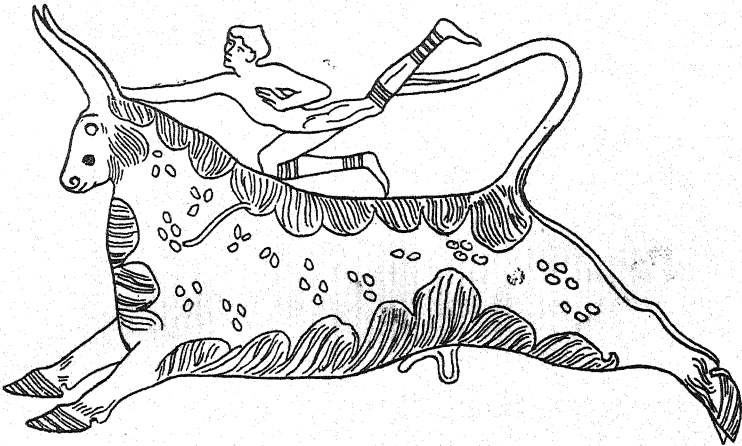


FIG. 300.—Outline restoration of a nearly complete fresco painted crudely on the wall of the Mycenaean Palace at Tiryns, Greece. The most interesting part, the face, is unfortunately missing and the artist who restored it was not aware that no three-quarter profiles have yet been found of earlier date than the fifth century B.C., a thousand years later than this fresco. Reproduced from *Tiryns* by permission of Messrs. Macmillan.

Tiryns, and other southern towns had by their wealth acquired a certain veneer of civilisation. It is not fair perhaps to judge their taste by the few examples of paintings found in their palaces, but what can be said for men who liked to have upon their walls such a fresco as this bull and acrobat (Fig. 300)? If they were not guilty of killing Ægean art, they were certainly aiders and abettors of the crime. They are

accused of killing it also in the physical sense, for they are supposed to have been the invaders who laid waste the palaces of Crete and dealt its civilisation the blow from which it was never able to recover.

In the absence of sufficient evidence from painting and statuary we have to rely upon the pottery to fill up the many gaps in our knowledge. In fact it is

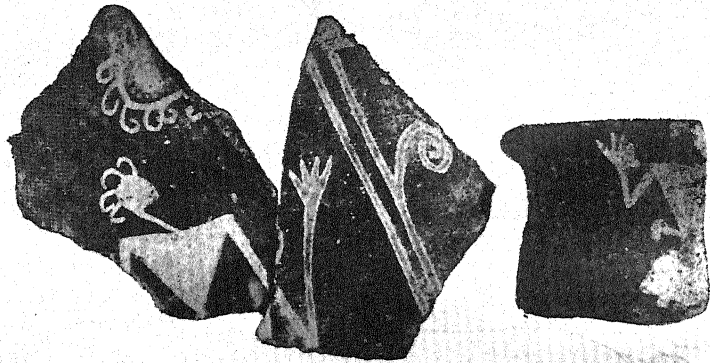


FIG. 301.—Fragments of dark pottery with white figures found in the earliest strata at Phylakopi. A fragment with a rather similar figure in red was found at Phaistos (*Mon. antichi. VI. Tav. IX.*). Compare with Figs. 100 and 373-a.

almost entirely by means of the decoration on the vases that the general history of Minoan art has been reconstructed. We now have to confess that although the exclusion of archæologists from Crete during the latter part of last century was tantalising, it was really beneficial; for it is only of recent years that excavators have realised the importance of noting and preserving every fragment of pottery. At Phylakopi in the island of Melos, Mr. C. C. Edgar and his fellow-workers had to sort out and record from ten to twenty

thousand fragments every day during the summer of 1899. Such careful work would have been deemed ridiculous by the old collectors of museum specimens. If they had been let loose at Knossos or at Phaistos twenty or thirty years ago the pages of Cretan history would have been irretrievably mutilated and confused.

On some of these fragments there were strange drawings of men with triangular bodies (Fig. 301) like those on the pottery of Susa and of Egypt, but with sword handles much like those worn by men on early Greek vases (Fig. 373 *bis*). Another design (Fig. 302) has a wonderful resemblance to those stylised forms of men



FIG. 302.—Vase found at Phylakopi, white design (man's body and arms) on dark ground. Compare Fig. 207.

on the Moussian ware (Fig. 207). The relics found in various places in Crete and the other islands have not yet been sufficiently well co-ordinated to serve as a basis for any general sketch of their evolution. The belief is beginning to gain ground that Mediterranean art had more affinity with Chaldean than with Egyptian; and that the Ægeans continued to follow the older traditions of Chaldea while the Egyptians, being restrained from following

their natural inclinations, developed that peculiar and stereotyped art which was only occasionally galvanised into life by influences from outside. In early dynastic times there were certainly communica-

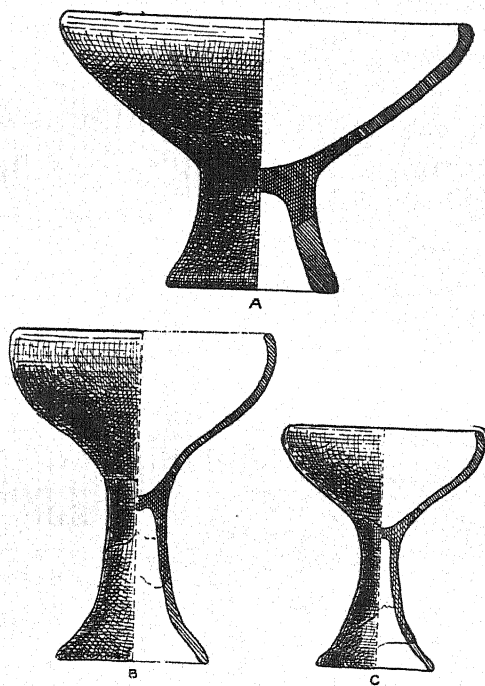


FIG. 303.—Dark-faced, hand-polished, earthenware goblets with hollow stems (shown in the sections). A, found at Abydos among first dynasty relics; B, C, found at Knossos in pre-Minoan strata.

tions between Egypt and Crete (Fig. 303), but until Asia Minor has been better explored we cannot say whether there was any direct intercourse between Crete and Chaldea.

We have seen that although the neolithic and

Early Minoan ware was of good shape and colour, the decoration on it was too elementary to give any indication as to the sort of work done by higher artists during those periods. In Middle Minoan times (about 2000 B.C.) an extraordinary outburst of ceramic activity took place, an outburst for which it is difficult to assign any definite cause. It appears to coincide with the first prosperity of Babylon (a few centuries after Gudea's time) and to precede the short spell of peace and prosperity which Egypt enjoyed during the twelfth dynasty. Egyptian art then had a slight revival of that naturalism which seems to have been always latent in its people and to have been continually suppressed by those in high authority. It would almost appear as if the Cretans had supplied the Egyptians with new ideas and in return had received some of that wealth offered so freely by the Nile to the dwellers on its banks. It was a poor return to make, and we may gather that it had an injurious influence on Crete. Just as its wise men thought the earth to be the centre of the universe round which the sun and stars revolved, so did its leaders evidently think that the dull mass of wealth must be the centre of attraction to which all other spheres of light and energy must be subordinate. Basing their calculations on this false assumption, it is no wonder that they went astray and that their systems could not stand the test of time.⁵²

In the earlier periods wealth seems to have been more diffused in Crete than in the autocratic kingdoms

on the Tigris and the Nile. When the richer men began to use cups and vessels made of precious bronze, or still more precious silver (Fig. 304), instead of alabaster or other brittle stone (Figs. 305 and 306), there was apparently a large class of fairly well-to-do people who continued to use the old-fashioned earthenware. This intermediate class was evidently desirous



FIG. 306.—Bowl made out of a small block of Egyptian syenite and having the same shape as some of the stone vessels of the early Egyptian dynasties. Found at Knossos in early or possibly pre-Minoan strata (*B. S. A.* ix. p. 98).

of fair forms but unable to afford the doubtful boon and certain bane of beauty embodied in all too precious metal. Thus the potter's art did not decay as it did in Egypt and Chaldea. On the contrary, a certain stimulus seems to have been given by the more extensive use of bronze and other metals for making cups and vases. It led the potters to produce a ware which was as hard and thin as that of ancient Susa. They also strove to copy the forms and even the lustre of the metal vessels (Fig. 307). This rivalry with metal workers induced them in rather later times to



FIG. 304.—Silver vessel about four and a quarter inches high found in a tomb at Gournia, Middle Minoan II.

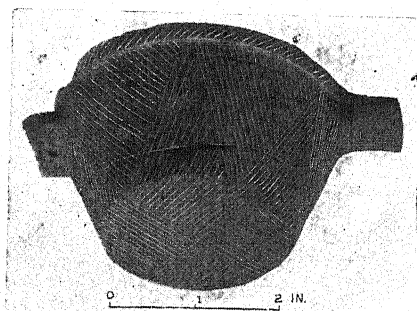


FIG. 305.—Stone vases from an Early Minoan cemetery at Palaikastro. Some of them may belong to the Middle Minoan period. Compare the decoration of the largest bowl with that of Fig. 222-bis.

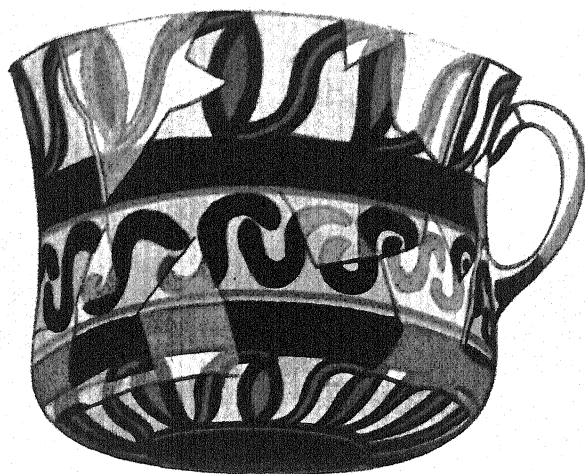


FIG. 308

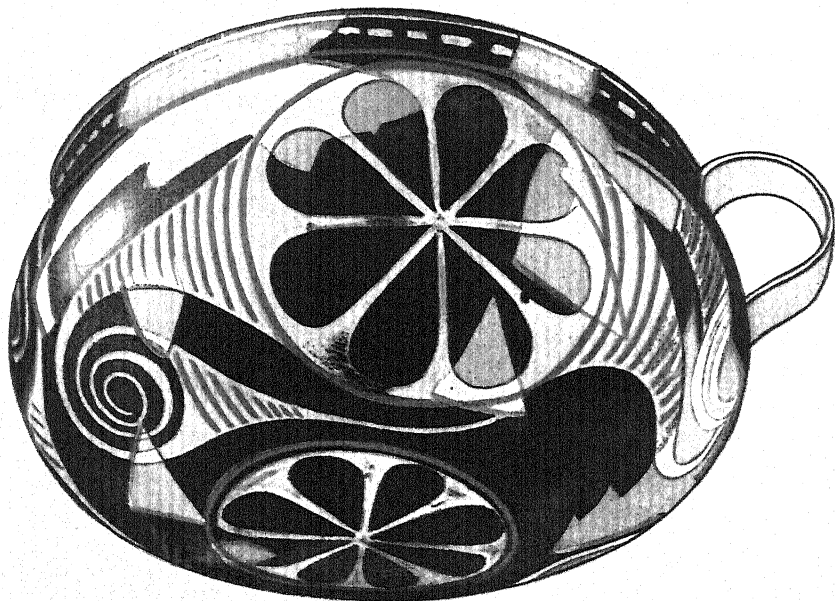


FIG. 310

FIGS. 308 and 310.—Two delicately thin “Kamarens” cups found at Knossos. The missing portions are indicated by lighter tints. Mid Minoan II. About two-thirds actual size. Compare the designs on Fig. 308 with the Chaldean design in Fig. 220 bis.

arrange their decoration in bands (Fig. 308), thus imitating the vases made of strips of metal riveted together; sometimes they imitated also the rivet heads.

Although occasionally the designs show a reminiscence of the natural forms of leaves and flowers



FIG. 307.—Two-handled cup of very thin earthenware, not thicker than an ordinary wine glass. The sprays painted on it are alternately red and white. Found in a tomb at Gournia. Middle Minoan II. Four and a half inches high.

(Fig. 309) yet as a rule they are entirely geometrical, but with a predominance of curved lines.⁵⁸ Among these the spiral is so frequently used that from this time onwards it is considered by one school of archaeologists as proving Mediterranean influence wherever it is found. This pottery has received the name of "Kamares ware" (Fig. 310), from having been first found in a cave near the village Kamares, below

Mount Ida. The composition, drawing, and colouring are generally very harmonious and decidedly original. The semicircles with radiating lines

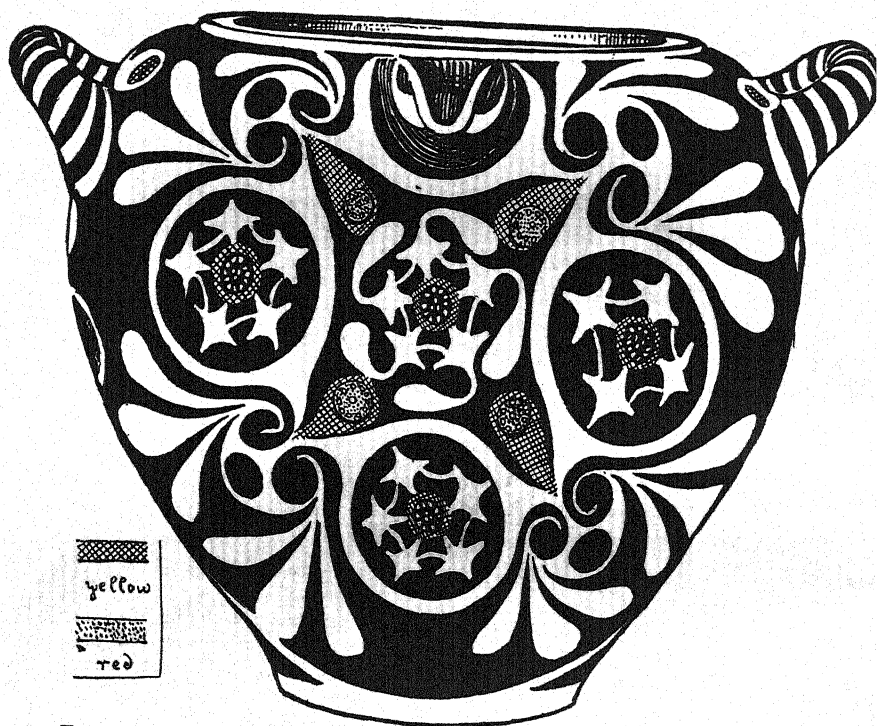


FIG. 309.—Two-handed vessel with spout. Creamy white design with yellow and crimson details on a lustrous black glaze. Kamares ware. Middle Minoan II. Knossos. Height nine inches.

(Fig. 311) recall to mind the vases of Elam, but the coincidence is perhaps fortuitous. The Cretan pottery had a wider range of colour, skilfully combining vermilion, orange, and brown designs on a black or pale yellow background. It shows the

simplicity and chastity of youth, with the usual accompaniment of severity, but it soon grew florid and luxuriant.

Then the perceptions of these islanders became enlarged; they looked out upon the world and saw that it was good. With broader views of life they no longer found so great a charm in petty decorative details—details that were probably personal in their origin, and derived from the tattoo marks on themselves and their neighbours. That is a strange barbarian stage from which some people never seem able to emerge.



FIG. 311.—Kamare ware cup found along with a jug in a recess in one of the rooms of the first palace at Phaistos. Compare it with Fig. 222. (*Rendiconti della Reale Accademia dei Lincei*, vol. xiv.) About four inches by three inches.

The bounteous feast of form and colour spread by nature for all her children, although ignored by most of her young barbarians, was partially appreciated by this Cretan race, whose mentality had not been starved by tyranny or by privation. Then they strove to fix the glorious vision and to interpret it. It is sad for us that none of the original attempts have been preserved, we can but judge of them by the reflections left upon the earthenware. Grasses and flowers, seaweeds and shells and fishes, the fairy nautilus and the demon octopus, were rendered with a skill which only comes from intimate knowledge and keen appreciation

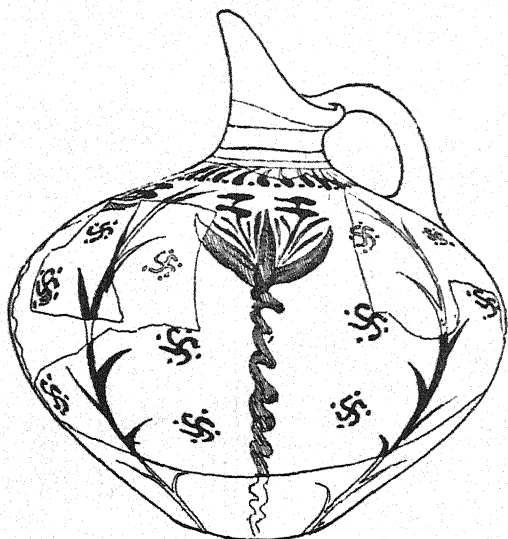


FIG. 312.



FIG. 313.

FIGS. 312, 313.—Conjectural reconstruction of two vases from fragments (shown by the darker strokes) found at Phylakopi in Melos. Black and brown designs on reddish yellow clay. The Melian relics have not yet been well correlated with those of Crete: these are assigned to the L.M. I. period. One-third actual size.

(Figs. 312 and 313). But the ceramic painters soon found that they could not satisfactorily reproduce the brilliant colours of the frescoes from which they probably took their inspirations, therefore they gradually ceased doing any polychrome work and limited themselves as far as possible to white on the light clay ground for these naturalistic drawings (Fig. 314).

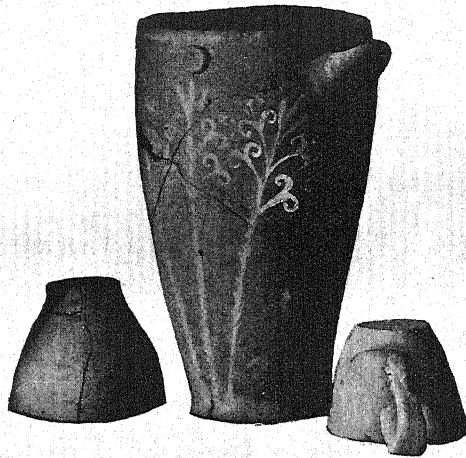


FIG. 314.—Vases found in the second palace of Knossos, M.M. III. The largest is ten inches high and is of a reddish brown colour, the lilies are plain white.

It is noteworthy that no drawings or paintings of human or animal figures have yet been found on the pottery of the early part of this period. Their absence seems to corroborate the theory that artists have always experienced more difficulty in drawing these subjects than in modelling them. In addition to the large stucco figures already mentioned there are

several faience statuettes (Figs. 315 and 316) and plaques (Fig. 317) which show how successful the



FIG. 315.



FIG. 316.

Reconstructions from various portions of glazed faience figures found in the Temple Repository of the second palace at Knossos. The robes are elaborately modelled and painted. Fig. 315 is thought to represent the mother goddess with her symbolic snakes; Fig. 316 her votary. One-third actual size. Fig. 316 *bis* shows how a similar subject was treated at a later period M.M. III.

Minoan potters were in modelling figures in the round and in relief. The only drawing of a human

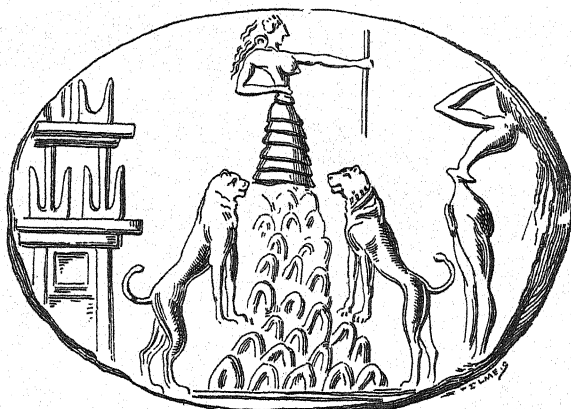


FIG. 316 *bis*.—Reconstruction from several fragments found at Knossos of clay impressions made by a seal one-third of the size of this drawing. It represents a votary with his Cretan girdle and slender waist worshipping a goddess at a mountain shrine, symbolised by the hillocks and also by the stylised ox-heads ("horns of consecration") on the left. Compare with Figs. 242 and 371.



FIG. 317.—Plaque in relief reconstructed from numerous fragments of faience work that had been made in a mould. Pale green with dark sepia markings. About half actual size. M.M. III.

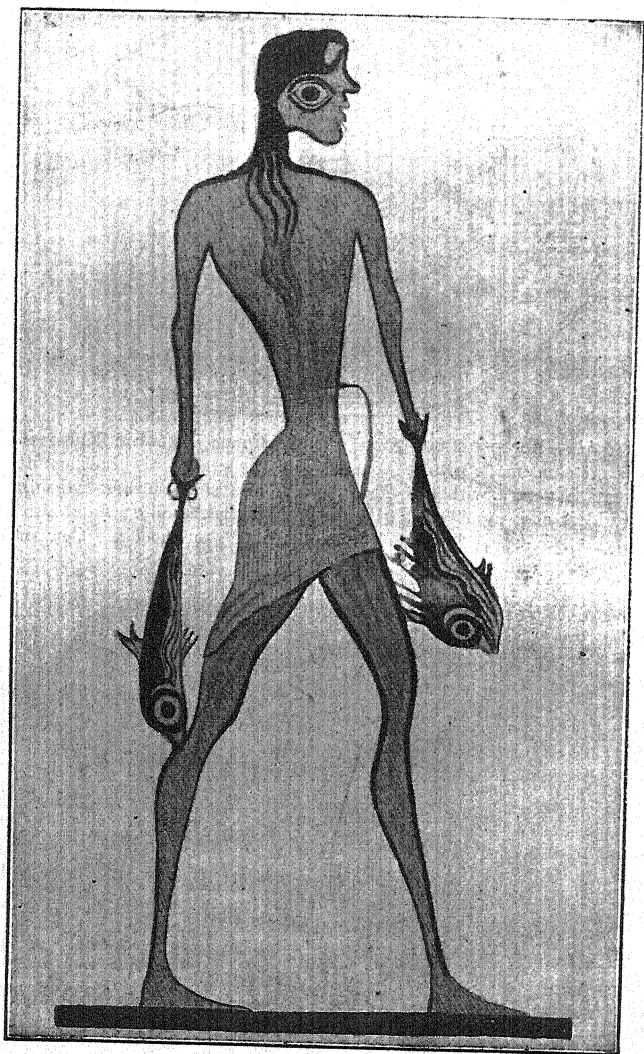


FIG. 318.—One of four fishermen drawn on the earthenware stem of a support for a lamp or a fruit dish. Found at Phylakopi. Four-fifths actual size. Probably the eye was enlarged in order to increase its efficacy as a charm against evil influences. The artist's sense of proportion had been ruined by his patron's desire for material advantages.



FIG. 320.—A coloured illustration of this vase, which was found at Palaikastro, will probably be given in the volume about the excavations there, shortly to be published by the British School at Athens. It is perhaps by the same hand as a vase found by Mrs. Boyd Hawes, and published in colour in her book on Gournia. In his *Palaces of Crete* (p. 264), Mosso, discussing degeneration, says that this vase is "of the first period," but his dating is not generally very accurate. Professor Bosanquet, who has kindly given me permission to reproduce it, tells me that it is certainly Late Minoan II. Dark brown on a light buff ground. Height eleven inches.

figure on pottery is this miserable specimen from Melos (Fig. 318), yet it is later by a century or more than that faience ware, and its badness may be due to decadence. The Melos artists were perhaps more daring than those of the parent school in Crete. They ventured to depict the swallow in its flight

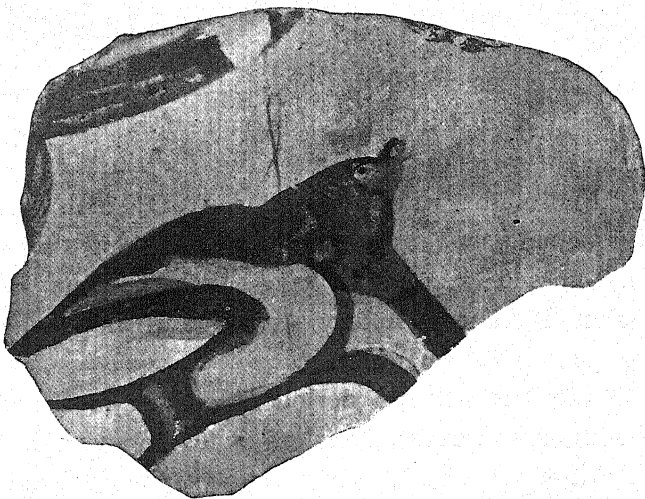


FIG. 319.—Swallow drawn with black paint on light coloured clay.
Phylakopi.

(Fig. 319), a subject which has not yet been found elsewhere in the Ægean, except on a gold ornament from Mycenæ.

One of the happiest inspirations of the Minoan potters was to use the octopus for their vase decoration; several splendid specimens have been dug up (Fig. 320). The creature was admirably adapted for decorating curved surfaces, but it also becomes

easily conventionalised (Figs. 321 and 322). Towards the end of the Late Minoan period it is hardly recognisable (Fig. 323).

The healthy growth of Cretan civilisation had been greatly favoured by the course of events in other countries. Troy, rich in gold and bronze, had been burnt to the ground in the Early Minoan period; the successive villages that occupied its site until Mycenaean times could give no trouble to the nascent power of Crete. It was unfortunate for Schliemann that he mistook this "burnt city" for the Homeric Troy he sought with such energy and zeal. The consequence was that, although he had dug through it, he missed seeing the real Troy and its Late Minoan (Mycenaean) luxury, greater and more refined than Homer had imagined it.

In the Mid Minoan period upheavals in Chaldea had sent great waves of restless exiles to overrun the lands of Syria and Palestine, finally penetrating as far as Egypt, and ruling as "shepherd kings" over its disunited and enervated inhabitants. It is difficult to say how far this affected Crete, but probably it helped to free her art from the paralysing influence of a decadent civilisation. She was then able to strike out that independent line which has had such far-reaching effect on the progress of the world.

It may be a mere coincidence, but when the Egyptians shook off the foreign yoke and became a flourishing and aggressive power under the eighteenth dynasty, then Cretan art began to degenerate. The

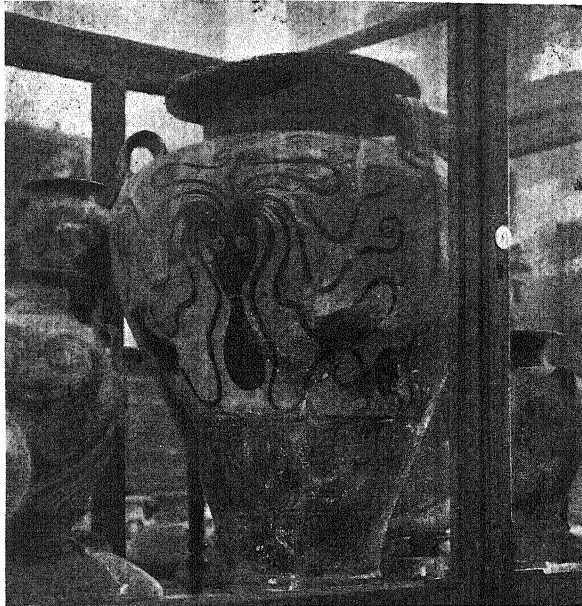


FIG. 321.—Large jar in Candia Museum. These less carefully rendered forms of octopus are generally supposed to show the beginning of stylisation, but there are many varieties of the tribe Octopoda, and some of them have very much the same appearance as the one on the jar.



FIG. 322

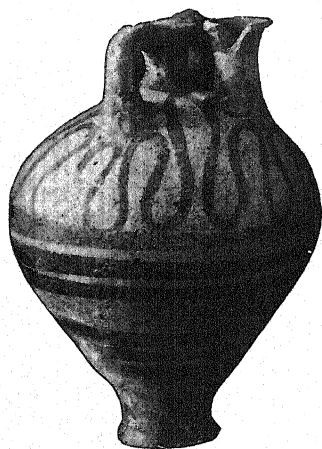


FIG. 323

FIGS. 322 and 323.—Stylisation is more apparent in Fig. 322, and seems complete in Fig. 323, but these wavy lines are also found in earlier ornamentation, before the octopus motive was popular, and this pattern may be derived from them. These vases are called stirrup vases from the shape of their handles; also false necked amphora because the actual neck or spout is at the side and the centre neck is solid.



FIG. 324.—Large jar (thirty-nine inches high) reconstructed from fragments found at Vaphio, near Sparta. In this "Palace" and other Late Minoan styles the ornamentation consists of dark-coloured designs drawn on a light ground. In the simpler Middle Minoan style the reverse system was employed. It reminds one of Ruskin's expression, that early Gothic windows showed patterns of light pierced through the darkness of the walls, while the later tracery showed designs drawn with darkness upon light.



FIG. 325.—Large vase (three and a half feet high) built up from fragments found in the passage to a chamber tomb at Mycenæ. Probably imported from Knossos (see *Journal of Hellenic Studies* (1903), pp. 157-205, "The Pottery of Knossos," by Mr. Duncan Mackenzie). Notice the curious modification of the rounded ends of the leaves of the great scrolls into fantastic volutes.

first steps in this degeneration are evident in the pottery of the Palace style (Figs. 324-329), so named by Sir Arthur Evans, because its motives were similar



FIG. 326.—Large jar (four feet high) built up from fragments found in the restored second palace of Knossos. The design is in relief assisted by painted lines. It represents a stylised papyrus flower (profile) and leaves. The large rosettes are the same flower seen full face.⁵⁴ The zigzag markings *may* be meant to indicate water, as in Egyptian drawings.

to those of the frescoes in the restored portion of the second palace of Knossos. Apparently there had been a revolution in which the second palace had

been burned down; at present we have no clue as to whether it was a revolution of the people against a tyrant, or of a tyrant against the people.

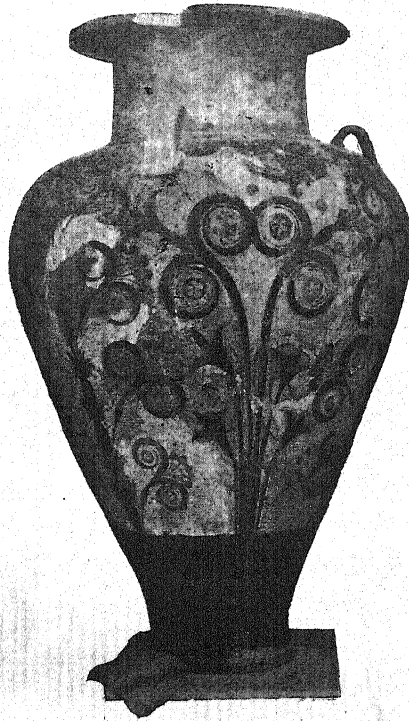


FIG. 327.—This design may have been evolved from a combination of the ordinary profile papyrus flower with the rosettes of Fig. 326.

When we have more information about the events of that period, and more evidence about the progress of its art, it will be possible to demonstrate the intimate connection between the social and artistic con-

ditions of a nation. It could be shown all the more



FIG. 328.—Earthenware vase resembling the one held by the cup-bearer (Fig. 296). Black pattern on a ruddy yellow slip.

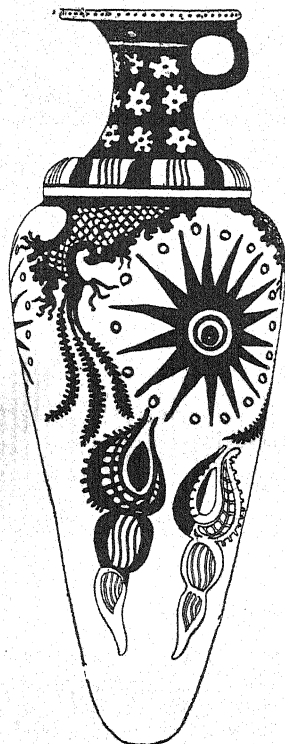


FIG. 329.—Vase of similar technique but more naturalistic design than Fig. 328. Palaikastro, Crete. Both figures are one-third actual size.

clearly in Crete, because the question there seems

not to have been complicated by foreign invasions or by disquieting inventions.

Although there are no representations of men or women on the painted pottery of Crete, there are several very excellent specimens of such work in relief on vases cut out of steatite (Figs. 330-334). In the

earlier days vases of harder stone were imported from Egypt; later on similar ones were produced in Crete, but the beauty of these hard stone vases consists entirely in their contours; they have no designs or figures carved upon them. The steatite

vases with reliefs all belong to the Late Minoan period,

and must, I fear, be classed as shams.⁵⁵ They were originally covered with gold foil, to simulate embossed vessels made with solid plates of gold. The rage of disappointed looters against this deceptive ware is often recorded by the minuteness of the fragments into which the vases have been broken. We, on the other hand, have to be thankful to the makers of these shams, for if they had been made of solid gold still fewer would have survived.

What marvels of the craftsman's skill, what dreams of beauty from an artist's brain have perished, burdened with their weight of gold or silver, victims of successful warriors' greed! Most lamentable, and yet



FIG. 330.—Steatite relief of an archer resembling those in Fig. 332.

most just. They are but instances of the inexorable law of the self-destructiveness of passions unrestrained. Greed and vainglory seek unnatural gratification,

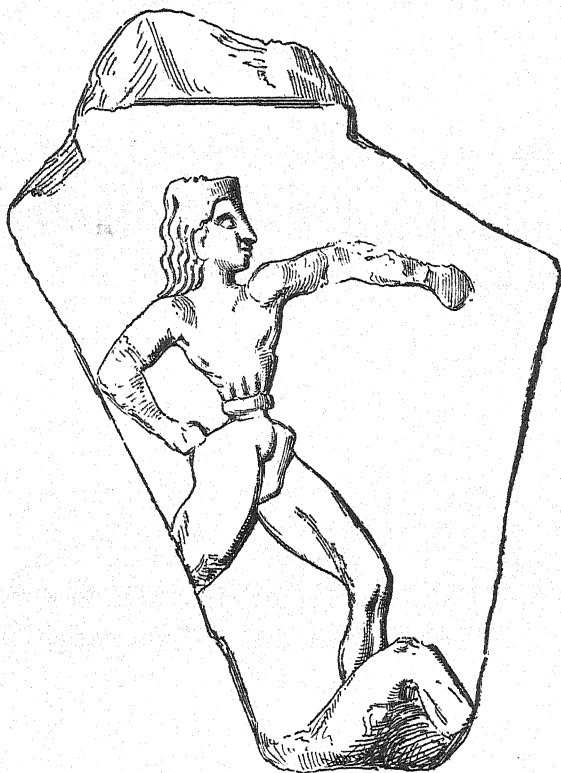


FIG. 331.—Fragment of a steatite box found at Knossos.

scraping together a great heap of golden ornaments, a flaunting evidence of ill-used wealth. In course of time other sufferers from the same disease appear, and they with violence destroy that artificial pile, reduce it to its constituent elements, and then labori-

ously begin again to build another temple to their derisive god. They are like children piling up sand castles diligently scooping up all the surrounding sand. The higher they build the less support have the foundations. Well were it for the world if but

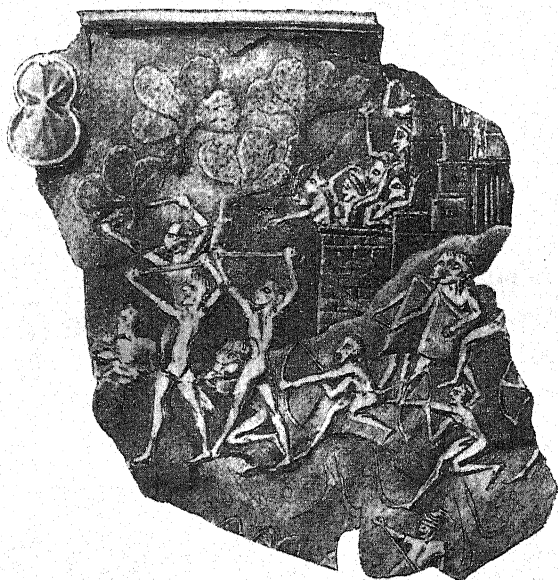


FIG. 332.—Fragment of a silver vase, found at Mycenæ, representing a skirmish outside a walled town. Facsimile in British Museum.

the dissipation of that wealth involved no more distress than children suffer when their sand castles crumble on the shore.

The groups of figures carved upon these vases confirm the belief inspired by some of the frescoes that Minoan artists had begun to solve the problem of pictorial composition. A fragment of a silver vase

found at Mycenæ is tantalising evidence of their skill (Fig. 332). The flatness and processional monotony of Egyptian and Chaldean work was repugnant to the broader-minded Cretan. Even when actually representing a procession (Fig. 333) he disregards its regularity and uniformity, those wave lengths of vibration which stirred responsive chords in the Semitic mind. He seizes the life and joy of the movement, and we feel that he is not a mere critical recorder, aloof from the crowd, but a man in full sympathy with his fellow-men, and delighted to fix and convey to others the sensations awakened in his heart. This rhyton (Fig. 334), found by the Italian mission at Hagia Triada, is a fine example of skilful grouping; incidentally it also shows the greater sense of justice inherent in a free people. We no longer have the threadbare subject of a victorious king slaying his unresisting enemies. Here man strives with man in equal contest; here the figures of the bulls are not designed to symbolise successful oppression by brute force, but rather the overcoming of it by strange daring and great skill.

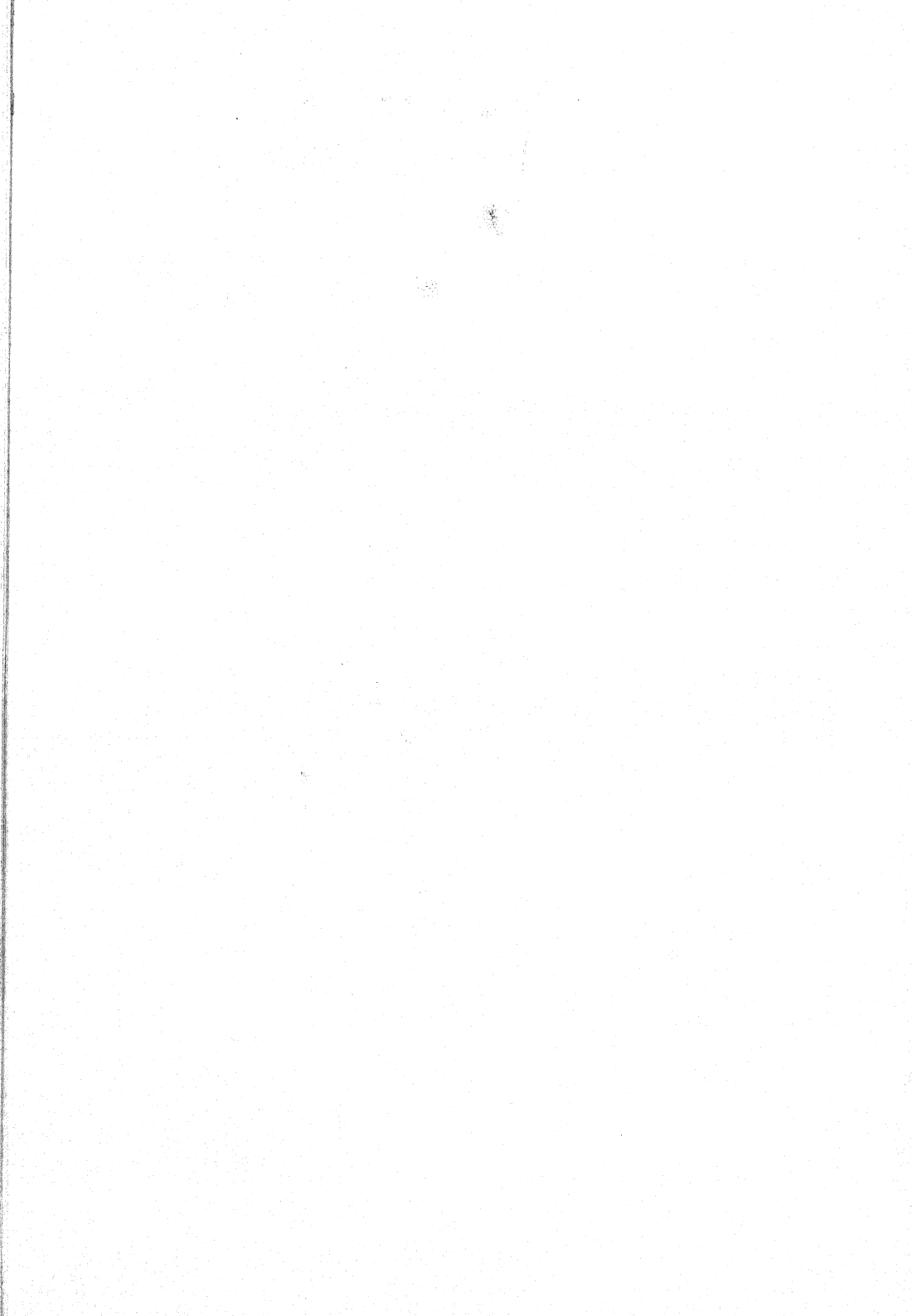
Some writers hold that these reliefs and the similar frescoes (Fig. 300) represent victims worried by bulls. Sad visions have been conjured up of youths and maidens sacrificed to gratify the "lust allied to cruelty" of wealthy tyrants levying a human tribute from their vassal states. It may have been so in the last degenerate stage; the Greek legends lend colour to the foul accusation. Certainly, too,



FIG. 333.—Extended drawing showing the band of figures round the "harvester" vase. The men are carrying implements resembling the forks used for corn or hay in Palestine at the present day. The lower part of the vase is missing. About half actual size.



FIG. 334.—Black steatite Rhyton, about eighteen inches high, found in the villa at Hagia Triada in 1903. A year afterwards nine other pieces were found, thus enabling Signor Halbherr, the head of the Italian Archæological Mission, to reconstitute the whole vase. Late Minoan I or II. (*Rendiconti della Reale Accademia dei Lincei*, 1905.)



some of the figures, apparently impaled on the horns of charging bulls, are female, for they have the conventional white skin. Other archæologists think that they are not impaled, but merely clinging to the horns. They point out that women had such a large share in the religious functions of Crete that they may well have taken part also in these dangerous performances. Like the Olympian games they were probably religious, and characterised more by feats of skill than by bloodshed. There is some confirmation of this theory in a curious



FIG. 335.—Agate seal found at Præsos, the old capital of the Eteocretans. Enlarged to twice the actual size.

seal (Fig. 335) on which a man is represented vaulting over a sitting bull, an animal so sleek and fat that no one could imagine it to be a dangerous antagonist.

The exact interpretation of the meaning of these scenes is still so uncertain that it seems safer to wait for fresh evidence. Even that procession has been the subject of much controversy. It has been said to represent a band of harvesters, a religious dance, a peasant rebellion, and a troop of soldiers. The famous so-called hunting scene in bold repoussé work on one of the gold cups from the Vaphio tomb near Sparta is supposed by Mosso to be a bull race

(Fig. 336-*a*). According to him the rider of the first bull is a female gymnast and she has not been gored by its horns but is clinging to them. The second bull has failed to jump the net and has thrown its male rider headlong. He says that similar performances are still given in Italy in the province of Viterbo.

These two cups (Figs. 336 and 337) are a triumph of the goldsmith's art. They were found by Dr. Tsountas in 1889, and were for some time a puzzle to archæologists, for although they have the usual faults of archaic work, they show a freedom and vigour never found in previous productions. The discoveries at Knossos led to their being classed as Minoan, and the finding of that rhyton in 1900 has confirmed the belief that even if they were not imported from Crete, they must have been made by Cretan artists who had come over to work in Greece.

The latter explanation is perhaps the most reasonable, for Crete never seems to have been rich in gold nor very devoted to its worship. The Myceneans, on the contrary, had comparatively large quantities of that metal, probably the result of the early exploitation of Thrace, one of the four rich gold-bearing regions of the ancient world. More than a hundred-weight was found by Schliemann in a few tombs at Mycenæ. This would be equal to about £4000 in our present coin, and was possibly then worth twenty times as much. Strangely enough silver was very rare at that period, and is supposed to have been worth twice as much as gold.



FIG. 336b

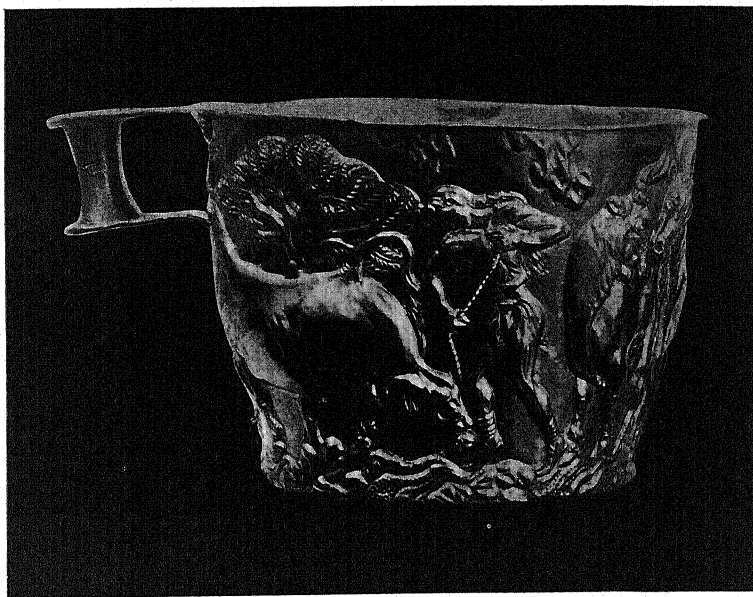


FIG. 337b

FIGS. 336b and 337b.—Gold cups found in a Mycenaean "beehive" tomb at Vaphio. They are wonderfully fine examples of repoussé work, but they have the mannerism of an art that has passed its prime. Nine-tenths of actual size. A silver cup of similar shape and design, and a rather larger gold cup with embossed octopus designs, were found in 1926 by Professor Persson of Upsala, in a "beehive" tomb at Dendra, near the Mycenaean citadel of Midea.

To face p. 386 and Fig. 336a

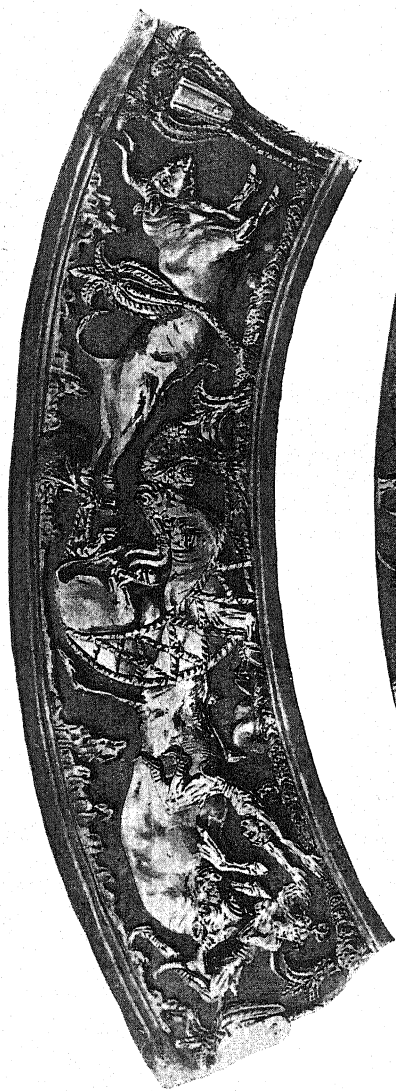


FIG. 336a



FIG. 337a

FIGS. 336a and 337a.—Extended drawing of the Vaphio cups. The artist was evidently unrestrained by any conventions or technical difficulties from representing animals in whatever attitude he considered most effective, profile, full face, turning their heads back, or bending them down sideways to toss an aggressor. The exaggerated length of the body was an accepted convention to represent rapidity of motion; it is seen here in four different degrees, each corresponding to the speed with which the animal is moving.

To face p. 387 and Fig. 336b

In those days neither gold nor silver was coined into money. They were simply desirable commodities, and used as convenient articles of barter. To those who have studied the fluctuations in the purchasing power of these metals it seems unfortunate that civilised nations should still take either of them as their standard of value. But human nature is very conservative in its beliefs about what is desirable or beautiful, and it will be centuries before even the civilised portion of the world realises that it has little definite use or desire for the actual gold, and that the high value of it is chiefly due to custom and convention.

In former times personal adornment with gold was a universal custom with those who could afford it. Some day that custom will be as extinct as tattooing. Even now it is chiefly kept up by the female sex, just as in savage races it is the women who are the last to give up beautifying themselves with tattoo marks.⁵⁶

Until comparatively recent times few beautiful and durable materials were commonly available; the rare and brilliant gold therefore had a natural fascination for mankind. Those who sought to enslave their fellow-men took full advantage of this weakness, for portable wealth is a most potent weapon, and the possessors of red gold were often able to dominate their world. It was probably with this weapon that the semi-barbarous Myceneans conquered and dispersed the more civilised inhabitants of Crete, and thus closed that chapter in the history of art.

For many after centuries this history presents a picture of confusion, degeneration and decay. The strangely oscillating pendulum of human thought and action had reached the utmost limit of its swing. Now with increasing speed it plunges back as if its upward climbing had had no real result. Such a belief may often be founded on too narrow a conception of the history of the world. Reactionaries may rejoice as the pendulum swings earthwards, the advocates of progress will watch with wonderment and fear its downward course, but still the great world clock moves on impelled by some hidden power. And who are we that we should strive so much to hasten or retard its speed? Our work is on a smaller scale and our vain frettings are but useless waste of energy that should be given to more humble duties lying ready to our hand.

Varying phases may be necessary stages in the development of man, as useful for his growth as to the plant world are the changes from bright summer to rich autumn and dark winter. We are tempted to lament the falling of the sere and yellow leaf; is it not better to regard it as but a sign that the new growth is feeling the first great pulsations of life within its buds? The old leaves have served their purpose, why sorrow that they should be pushed off by those which have to carry on the work? There is no great merit in a struggle to maintain conditions that are no longer beneficial to the world. It is only to a dead branch that dead leaves cling.

The vigour of the living branch that casts them off shows that their growth had indeed at one period been vigorous and useful.

When the time comes for our civilisation to be displaced by the stirrings of a newer life, God grant it may be said of us that we have served our purpose faithfully and that our growth was sound.

CHAPTER XIV

HUMBLE ORIGINS OF GREEK ART

THE cold blasts of barbarism that swept over Ægean art, leaving it shrivelled and distorted in its Cretan home, produced an autumnal glory of golden splendour in the cities of the southern part of Greece. In Mycenæ, in Tiryns, and in Sparta there was abundance of that wealth which has nothing in common with real welfare except in the origin of its name. The goldsmith was the chief exponent of their art, as he has always been in rich periods of poor taste.

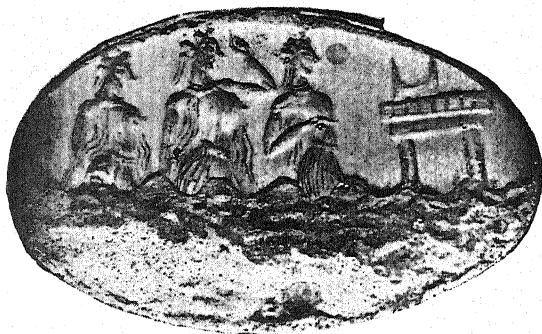
Large quantities of elaborate jewellery were discovered by Schliemann in the Late Minoan graves of the acropolis at Mycenæ (Fig. 338). It astonished the archæologists of that day, and it received extravagant praise from people who did not dream that art could be older than the Greeks. Even now they hardly seem to realise that better work (Fig. 339) was done in Egypt a thousand years before the goldsmiths of Mycenæ produced those clumsy signet rings of massive gold to please their wealthy lords. In the whole hundredweight of golden ornaments buried in these tombs there was hardly a single specimen in which the value of the mere material was not infinitely greater than that of the artistic work expended on



a



b



c

FIG. 338.—Signet rings found in the Acropolis of Mycenæ. They represent Cretan women performing religious functions; *a* and *b* are solid gold, *c* is silver, plated with gold; *a* is magnified nearly two diameters, *b* and *c* about two and a half. Athens National Museum.

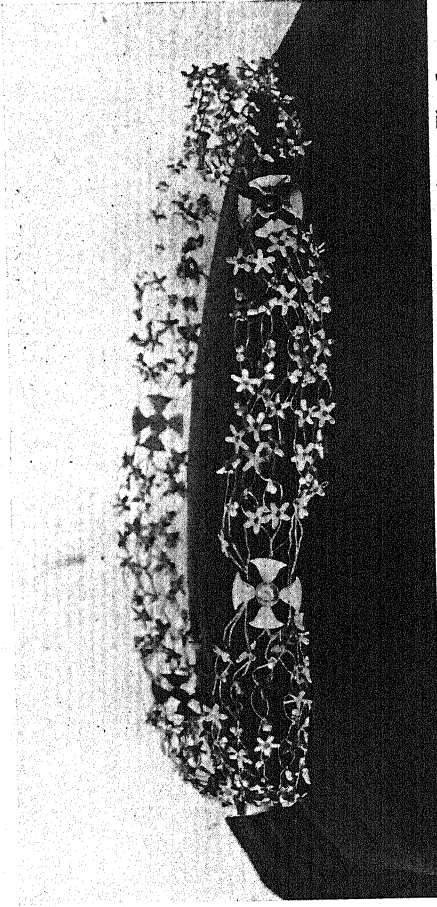


FIG. 339.—Head-dress of a princess of the twelfth dynasty (2000 B.C.) found at Dahshur. The flowers and berries are of carnelian, turquoise, and lapis lazuli set in gold, and connected by gold wires. This is the only example of a Maltese cross in Egyptian work, and may be derived from Chaldea or the Aegean, or it may have had an independent origin, as a combination of four stylised lotus or papyrus flowers.



FIG. 340.—One of the five bronze daggers found in tombs of the Acropolis of Mycenæ, inlaid with gold and silver. Nine and a half inches long.

it. It always seems as if mankind had such a limited amount of energy available for the satisfaction of its æsthetic instincts, that the more work it spends in providing material so much the less can it devote towards enduing that material with the higher forms of art.

Quite typical is the contrast between the taste displayed in the figures on those seals and the refinement of these designs (Figs. 340-*a* and *b*), worked with thin sheets of precious metal on thick blades of bronze. Though found at Mycenæ, they are thought to be the work not of local artificers but of Cretan craftsmen.⁵⁷ They are of earlier date than the seals and other ornaments of solid gold; it seems as if art was then still struggling to be free, but gradually the new master's heavy hand crushed and deformed it. During many



FIG. 340-*a*.—One of the bronze daggers found by Schliemann at Mycenæ covered with a thick incrustation. Several years elapsed before it could be removed and it is said that he never saw the delicate inlaid work of silver and gold skilfully alloyed to produce various colour effects. Length, seven inches.

succeeding centuries its feeble efforts awaken pity, almost derision.

It is doubtful whether we shall ever be able to disentangle the whole story of the troublous period that ensued, or even to estimate the real character of the currents that met together in this whirlpool of the ancient world. For some unknown reason—political, climatic, perhaps geological, but probably economic—a great upheaval and dispersion of nations seems to have taken place north of the Balkans, and to have ultimately affected the whole of the then known world, even as far as Egypt, where the Jewish exodus shows a small back eddy in the universal movement.

During this period iron gradually supplanted bronze.⁵⁸ The economic changes produced by such a revolution in the habits and capabilities of nations must have greatly contributed to the general unrest, if indeed they were not its chief cause. The acknowledged standards of value were all upset. Those who were rich in bronze became gradually reduced to comparative poverty. The centres of wealth production were shifted; even the art and craft of warfare had to be modified by the races that adopted the new metal. It must have been a terrible period, especially for those who had been nourished in comfort or luxury. Ignorant of the sources of their power, carelessly following the beaten path trodden by their ancestors, they were utterly unable to understand why their wealth was vanishing. For, just as

in modern times wealth is a weapon, and each man thinks himself entitled to all the advantages he can obtain by using it, so in those days a weapon was wealth, and none felt any scruple in using it to force his fellow-men to yield their property and lives to serve his will. When new inventions rendered a rich man's weapons less efficient the chief sources and mainstays of his wealth were correspondingly diminished.

The wealth already accumulated by the older civilised nations had exercised its usual disruptive influence, separating more and more widely the richer families, and rendering them more and more antagonistic to each other and to their poorer brethren. Art had long felt its baneful sway, and everywhere was decadent. Nations had no cohesion, and each in turn fell victim to predatory combinations formed not by the most intelligent and civilised but by the strongest and most unscrupulous wielders of the new weapons.

The free and energetic Ægean race spreading along the Mediterranean shore had rivalled and in many ways outshone the far wealthier Egyptians, but now its power was broken, and there was no other race fit to carry on the tradition of its art. Its trade fell into the hands of the Phœnicians, a Semitic tribe which had acquired some skill as mariners in the Persian Gulf, but had been forced to emigrate to Syria after the Elamite reaction in the Cassite period.

The culture of these Phœnicians used to be very much overrated. That phrase, "the grave Tyrian

trader," captivated the fancy of mid Victorian scholars, with whom words and phrases had undue influence. In the nineteenth century traders were beginning to be idealised as beneficent messengers of peace; the literary world did not imagine that commerce could degenerate into a struggle for monopolies, a struggle nearly as injurious as ordinary warfare, and infinitely more sordid.

The Phœnicians were credited not only with the invention of the alphabet, and with the introduction of civilisation into the distant West, but also with the diffusion of their love of art. Wherever any unexpected trace of artistic taste was found, its origin was immediately attributed to these Semitic traders. Nowadays the tendency is just the other way. The merchant princes of Tyre and Sidon, and the founders of great Carthage have been called "peddling bearers of culture at second hand," and Dr. Hogarth says that "the great difficulty which confronts a student of Phœnician art is to find a distinctive Phœnician art at all."

The waves of Cretan civilisation had lapped in vain against the mountain fastnesses of that strange Hittite federation whose stubborn power had checked and diverted the well-trained myrmidons of Egyptian and Assyrian greed, but apparently had no constructive energy, and left no lasting mark on literature or art. Its function seems to have resembled that of Switzerland in the Middle Ages—a barrier, not a contributor to the contending streams of evolution.

One of these streams, when it first began to trickle down from the vast reservoirs of the mysterious north, had been barred effectively by the Hittites, and being barred had gained in strength. This was the Ionian branch of a flood issuing from that Aryan spring, so rich in strong ferments for the stirring of mankind, but whose exact locality is still a matter of dispute. The Aryan or Indo-European race (if race it be and not some strange influence affecting many kindred races), of which so much is written and so little known, seems to have thrust itself as a wedge-shaped phalanx from the steppes of Asia to the western shore of France, a mighty flood, destined in later times to cover half the world. As it surged along the great Danubian plain it sent one overflow, consisting of Hellenes, across the Balkans. Another section, the Italiotes, penetrated through the Alps to form the basis of the Latin people. Of the first overflow a portion, afterwards known as the Phrygians, branching eastwards, crossed over the Hellespont into Asia Minor. There on the forgotten and long buried ruins of the burnt city of prehistoric Troy some of these wanderers built another city, girt with great walls like those of Greek Mycenæ, and adorned with the same barbaric splendour. Others who had come before, and still others who had followed after, colonised the fertile regions along the coast, but do not seem to have penetrated far into the Hittite land.

Backwards and forwards swept these migrant

tribes, displacing and mingling with the original inhabitants, or else forcing their own kindred to wander farther on. Some of them crossed and recrossed the intervening seas, so that it is well-nigh impossible to trace the origin and wanderings of any individual tribes, and almost hopeless to attempt to distinguish their share in the evolution of the art that we call Greek.⁵⁹

What stage of civilisation these Indo-Europeans had reached before their surplus swarmed over into Greece and Asia Minor, and how far their art had been independent of southern influence, have been matters of much controversy. It is, however, generally admitted that their material and social conditions were not nearly so complex as those of the Mediterranean, Egyptian or Chaldean races, and that their art had not developed beyond the decorative stage and was of rectilinear geometric style.

It may be that when they first entered Crete in comparatively small numbers their influence was a healthy one, stimulating the more refined but less vigorous inhabitants, just as the early Semites stimulated the Sumerians. They were not sufficiently coherent to acquire any distinctive name, or if they did it has not come down to us. The chief evidence of their presence is afforded by the place names, and by the shape of the skulls found within their tombs. Then fresh swarms seem to have come over in much greater numbers, and to have conquered rather than mingled with the people in possession. Thus they

checked and injured the free growth of art, forcing it to minister to their more barbaric tastes.

This was the Achæan wave, conquering the southern part of Greece, building great strongholds at Mycenæ and at Tiryns, accumulating vast stores of gold and debasing Ægean art. After a few short centuries another wave, known by the name of Dorians, slowly advancing through Thrace, deprived the Achæans of the sources of their gold, and thus indirectly stirred them up to attack and ruin Crete (about 1400 B.C.).

As the Dorian pressure became more and more acute, the Achæans sallied forth again to find new homes; this is now thought to be the real cause of their attack on Phrygian Troy (about 1250 B.C.). The sad story of the wanderings and disasters of the Achæan princes after their capture of that city is said by Curtius to be a poetic rendering of their vain efforts to find new tracts of land when they had discovered that the Trojan territory was too small or too strongly held to satisfy their wants.

With the final successes of the Dorians in the eleventh century, the last flicker of artistic life was extinguished throughout the whole of the Ægean. It is possible that deep down in the hearts of the conquered people a few sparks still glowed, especially in obscure spots like Cyprus and other islands, destined to stimulate or add to the bright flame which, after centuries of darkness, was to burst forth in Greece and to illuminate the world. But of this

period of gestation the records are too confused and scanty. When Asia Minor has been systematically explored we may be able to see how far its Aryan invaders were affected by Hittite and Oriental art, and thus helped to carry it across to Greece. In Greece itself the British, French, German, and other Hellenic societies are doing splendid exploration work, but much more will have to be done before we can trace the rapid steps with which a semi-barbaric race ascended so rapidly to the highest pinnacle of artistic glory. At present we can only note sporadic efforts, such as those in Bœotia, Sparta, Ephesus, or Naukratis, which produced no continuous development, but probably helped the general growth of art until it blossomed forth in full beauty in Attica.

For three or four centuries after the Dorian invasion we have little evidence regarding the progress or degeneration of the inhabitants of Greece, beyond that furnished by the pottery and a few carved objects. The Greek language was developing into a marvellous instrument for expressing human thought, although their literature was still in the unwritten stage. The oral traditions about the origins of art which have been preserved by Greek writers are not more trustworthy than those of other nations. Progress in art, as in other branches of knowledge, is usually attributed not to a gradual evolution by the efforts of the many, but to the teaching or the brilliant discoveries of a few semi-divine masters. Early chroniclers always prefer the dramatic and the per-

sonal; the recording of slow growth finds no favour with them nor with their readers.

Thus the early Greek writers attributed the invention of sculpture to Dædalus, asserting that he made his statues so life-like that they could even see and speak, and would run away unless bound with a chain to their pedestals. Later writers are much more rationalistic, and only say that "Dædalus was the first to open the eyes of statues, to free their arms from their sides, and to make their legs stride, while his predecessors had left their eyes shut, their arms glued to their sides, and their legs as if grown together" (Professor E. A. Gardner's *Handbook of Greek Sculpture*, p. 79).

Greek sculpture, like all other art that is really original and progressive, arose from small beginnings and in response to very definite desires. We have already seen that the stimulus to artistic effort was often given by impulses that were wholly unconnected with any desire for works of art. What direction this impelling force should take was a matter for the artists to decide, if they had sufficient independence and strength of will to dominate and guide it. Where there is no impelling force all guidance is in vain.

Palæolithic man evolved his art from a desire to have control over the forces of nature; the Asiatic from a desire to display his control over his fellow-men; the Egyptian from a desire to secure a dwelling-place for his spirit after death. The Greek

evolved his art from a desire to secure the earthly presence of his gods.

The blind forces of nature, sometimes beneficent but more often harmful, the brute forces of human rulers claiming to be divine, the dim dread forces of the dwellers in the world beyond the grave, were now succeeded by the intelligent forces of a group of beings who, although immortal and of fearful power, were yet of like passions with their worshippers, and could feel sympathy with all their sorrows and their joys.

As to the origin of this religion we know but little. The seeds of various religions, like the seeds of different plants, have often a strong resemblance to one another, although from some may spring the brightest flowers, from others but the rankest weeds. The tree and pillar cult of many early races seems to have had its analogy among the Aryan speaking peoples, but the powers that made these shapeless blocks their dwelling-place were imagined by the Greeks as of beings of a purely human form. That devotion to the grotesque and horrible which characterises certain races, and that inclination towards the weird and unnatural which distinguishes other phases of human evolution, seem to have found no echo in the Aryan mind. The Greek gods could indeed change themselves into animals, but they changed completely, and did not become composite as in Egypt. The only unnatural forms commonly imagined by the Greeks were those of Centaurs

and of Satyrs, both of whom represented brute forces and desires. Their Sphinxes and Sirens were derived from foreign sources.

But from imagination to concrete expression the advance is slow and difficult. Even when sculpture and painting have become articulate, how sadly do they fail to correspond with our mental conceptions of what might be done if only we knew how! And thus the Greek, age after age, slowly transforming the uncouth stone or shapeless trunk into the semblance of a human form must occasionally have felt despair at the apparent hopelessness of his endeavours. It was not that he consciously desired to reproduce the outward semblance of a man and intentionally strove to make it grow into a perfect statue. He chiefly strove to make his figures fit for the indwelling presence of the gods. Therefore he tried to give them some resemblance to his own conception of how they would appear if he could see their immortal bodies with his own mortal eyes. The vague image in his mind grew with his own mental growth. Growth is not conscious, and is not greatly quickened by merely taking thought. Its essential element is life—life permeating the whole body, not simply concentrated in an unduly developed brain. The Greek sculptors may be considered as forming one of the hands of the corporate nation, and their actions may be judged as being necessarily influenced by the condition of the whole body politic. Now the whole Greek nation was imbued with a firm belief in gods of human form,

and naturally strove to visualise this firm belief. Those whose productions were helpful in these strivings would soon meet with keen appreciation; and appreciation is the quickening fire of all artistic life.

The true artist loves to be understood—that is his best reward; though men whose lodestar is material wealth assert that the desire for money is the best incentive, and they estimate the value of his productions in their sordid terms of coin. Artists do not seem to have obtained large money rewards for their work even in the palmiest days of Greece. Sculptors were usually the servants of the state,⁶⁰ and probably the same system was pursued in the period called archaic—that is to say, down to the end of the sixth century. The prospect of obtaining some renown was, however, beginning to be opened out both to sculptors and to painters; and for the first time in history we find the names of artists plainly recorded on their work. In the Hellenistic period (350–150 B.C.) money played a much more important rôle in the history of art, and probably assisted in its swift decay.

The early stages of their efforts to express the inchoate ideas of their less gifted fellow-men have not yet been fully traced. It is difficult to assign definite dates to the statuary of the archaic period, but it is supposed that none of it is much earlier than about 600 B.C. Previous to that we have only small statuettes and votive figurines.

These eighth century ivories found at Ephesus (Figs. 341 and 342) were votive offerings in an early



FIG. 341.—Ivory figures found in the deposits surrounding the earliest temple of Artemis (Diana) at Ephesus in 1904-5. Actual size. Constantinople.

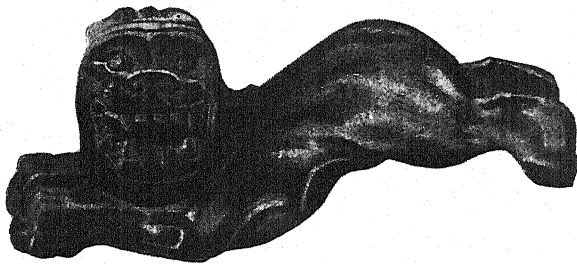


FIG. 342.—It is difficult to imagine what could have been the origin and purpose of this ivory carving. That attitude is not seen in any other specimen and the style is equally strange. Actual size. Constantinople. Facsimile in the British Museum. See *Excavations at Ephesus*, Hogarth, 1908, pp. 42 and 232.

temple to the great Diana of the Ephesians. They show distinct signs of Oriental influence in the elaborate details of their drapery, covering with merely conventional folds the poorly modelled form. The term "Oriental" has a very limited meaning when used in connection with art work in Greek times. It does not refer to any region east of Persia, for we have no evidence that any art development had yet taken place in India. The ivory lion (Fig. 342) might seem to indicate that Asia Minor had received some influence from China, but nothing definite is known about the condition of art under the Chou dynasty which was ruling China at that period. There is no proof that the current of artistic influence

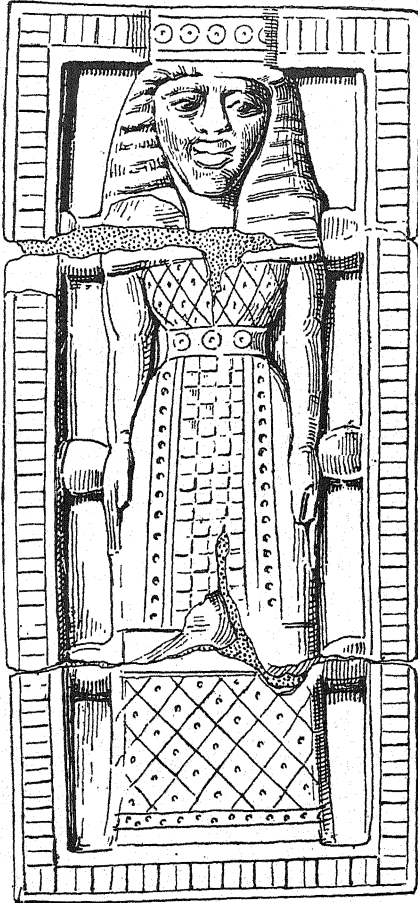


FIG. 343.—Early seventh century ivory relief. Very similar to the statue (Fig. 349-b). Probably an imitation of the very ancient statue of Artemis, which at that time was still revered in her temple at Sparta.

had ever set westward from China towards India and Persia in those early times, but there is every reason to believe that it did flow eastwards. All the well-known early Chinese art was influenced by the Buddhist missionaries from India after India itself had received an impulse from the Greeks following

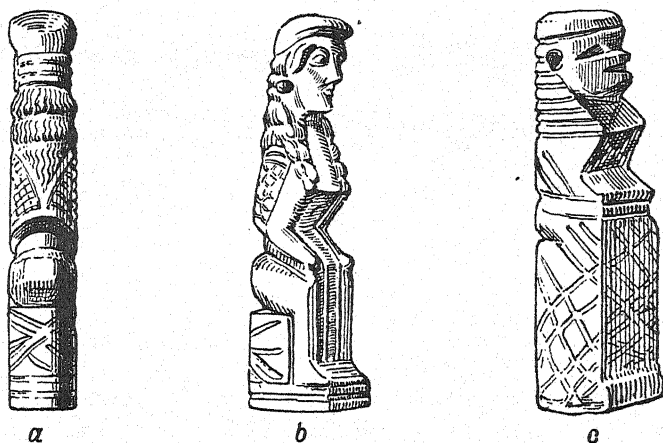


FIG. 344.—Early seventh century. Ivory. The square block-like form may be due to haste and carelessness or may be an intentional copy of the square pillar idol of their forefathers (see Fig. 349-a). Scale $\frac{1}{2}$.

in the wake of the victorious troops of Alexander (327 B.C.).

The next series of examples of the plastic art comes from the Greek mainland. About a hundred thousand figurines have lately been dug up from the site of the temple of Artemis Orthia, that temple of Sparta which witnessed those strangely contrasted rivalries when boys of gentle blood competed for the honours awarded for excellence in singing or for

endurance of most brutal flogging. Unfortunately no photographs of these figurines and other relics are yet available. Judging by the drawings (from which Figs. 343-346 are a selection) published in the Annual

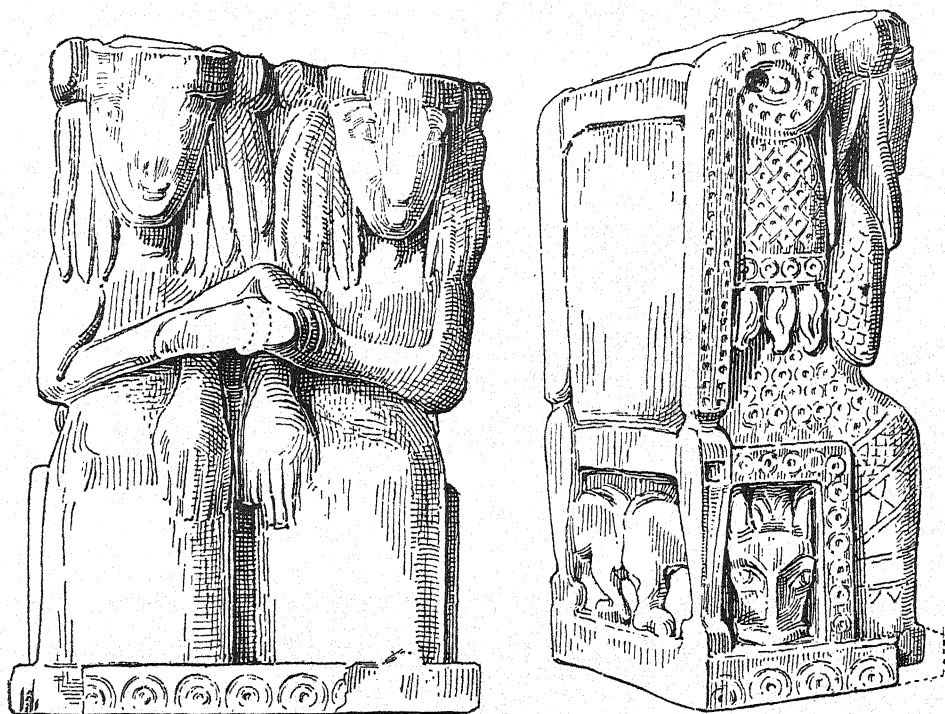


FIG. 345.—Early seventh century work. Ivory. A strange composition not yet identified or explained. One of the men seems to be holding the other by the wrist, in the fashion that is frequently found in Chaldean seals (Fig. 258) and on some Greek vases. Scale $\frac{1}{2}$.

of the British School at Athens (1906-7, p. 94 ff.) it does not appear that any important deductions can be made from them about the progress of art in that period (700-600 B.C.). The most interesting is an

incised plaque (Fig. 347) which seems to show that, contrary to the usual rule in former times, drawing was in a more advanced state than carving. The rest, with the exception of the nude statuette, are apparently crude reproductions of works of Oriental origin.

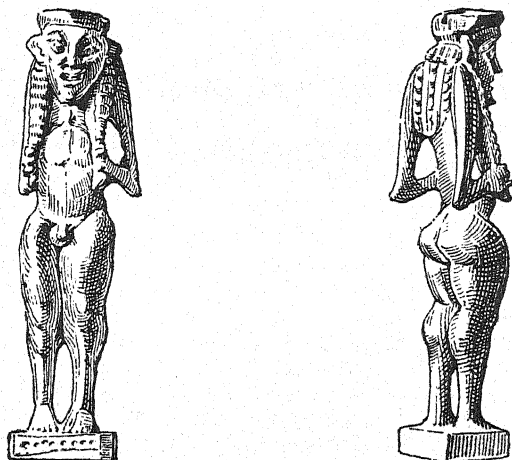


FIG. 346.—Late seventh century. Ivory. Probably reflecting the custom of athletes appearing naked at the Olympian games, which had now become well established. Scale $\frac{3}{4}$.

This Oriental influence had probably been transmitted both to Ephesus and to Sparta through the medium of rich Lydia, whose ruler, Gyges, had such stores of precious metal that he is supposed to have originated coining it into money, thus facilitating its exchange for other commodities. A most fateful invention, pregnant with great results, destroying men's cherished ideals, loosening some bonds and tightening others with increased severity. Slowly but surely it

undermined the rule of custom by which all the affairs of life were regulated, and it gradually substituted that rule of contract which has turned the whole world into one vast market-place of hagglers over the amount of coin they shall receive. By raising up a rival system it diminished the importance of landed wealth and of the possession of

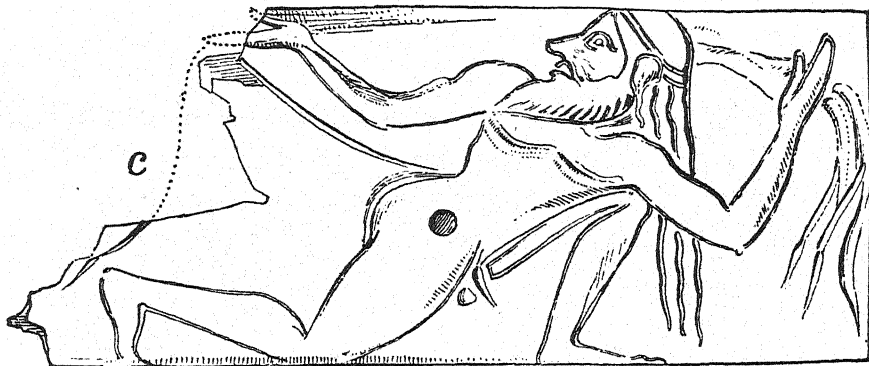


FIG. 347.—Incised ivory plaque, possibly a preliminary sketch before cutting the relief. Compare it with Fig. 137. Here the man's chest appears to be shown, not his back.

large herds of cattle and of great stores of corn. Trading on an extensive scale became more practicable. This encouraged the growth of industrial cities, acquiring wealth from surrounding peoples by keen commercial dealings instead of by parasitic battenning on the tribute extorted by despotic rulers. The power of the sword thus began to pale before the power of the purse. Who shall say which power can work more evil or more good?

It is unfortunate that so little is known of the

evolution of the Eastern and Western wings of the mixed race that we now call Greek. It is doubtful whether Sicily and Magna Græcia contributed much to its artistic development, although the rulers of their cities were wealthy and luxurious. They had indeed made a good beginning, and at one time were, in their art work, considerably ahead of Greece, especially in the designs on their coinage; but their later work did not fulfil the promise of its earlier days. The civilisation of the Ionian and other Greek communities fringing the shore of Asia Minor was up to the end of the sixth century in many respects far in advance of that on the mainland; but we have only a few relics of their art, and the written records make but little mention of it.

History in those times had no interest for mankind; youth does not care to hear stories about its own childish days. Until more comprehensive excavations have been made we cannot well judge how far the Asiatic Greeks had travelled on that glorious road which led their brethren to such fair heights of fame. Some day when sufficient funds are forthcoming for the systematic exploration of the great prehistoric mounds of Kolophon and other districts on the Anatolian coast we may be able to reconstruct the history of the left wing of the Greek army of civilisation before the time when it was crushed and dispersed by the mercenary hordes of ravening Persia.

When we come to consider the paintings on the vases we shall see more plainly how strong were

Oriental influences throughout the whole Greek world during the seventh century. But by that time Oriental sculpture had fallen very low, and probably it was chiefly concerned with reproductions of those female effigies which were and still are so revered in the Mediterranean area. Although this cult has died out in the East, many archæologists maintain that the type had its origin in Asia, and they are inclined to consider the Greek Aphrodite as the direct descendant from the nude figurines of Egypt and Chaldea. The line of descent is broken, however, both in Egypt and in Asia; nor can it be traced far back in Greece. Neither can we be sure that the underlying ideas connected with these images were always the same. In the earliest times they were probably imagined to be useful charms or fetiches, not real deities; then they came to be regarded as protectors or as companions of the dead. It is from the graves that most of them have been obtained; if the primitive Greeks had been in the habit of burying their dead we should have known much more about their early history, but the Aryan peoples practised cremation, consequently until they became settled and began to preserve the ashes and to erect memorials of the dead, they left few traces of their religion or their art.

As images have been found in Europe in palæolithic strata, it almost seems as if the practice of burying small figures must be due to one of those customs or religions which are so persistent that they

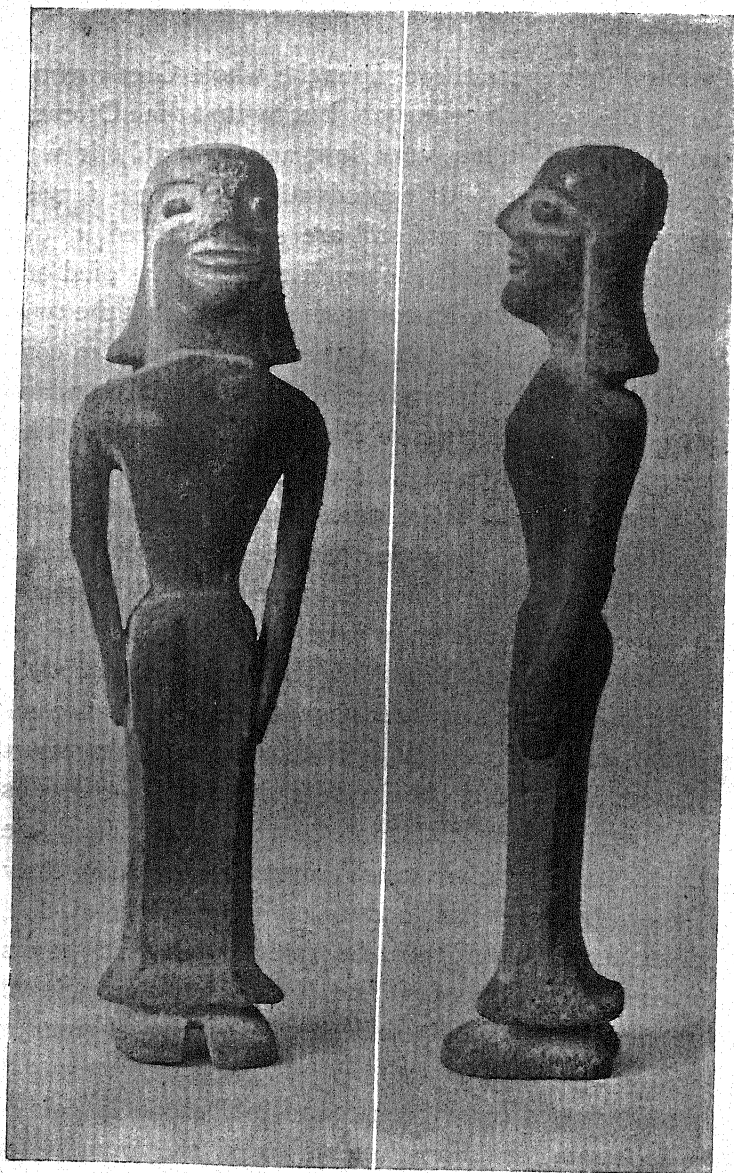


FIG. 348.—Bronze figure from the Temple of Hera and Menelaus, near Sparta.
About 700 B.C. Height five and a quarter inches.

have been described as springing from the soil in



FIG. 349-*b*.—Life-size marble statue of Artemis (a goddess similar to the Diana of the Romans, but confused by the Greek settlers in Ephesus with the Babylonian mother goddess Astarte), dedicated by Nikandre of Naxos. It has no depth, but is like a thick board roughly carved into human shape. See Loewy's *Nature in Early Greek Art* (1907), p. 54. Now in the National Museum at Athens.

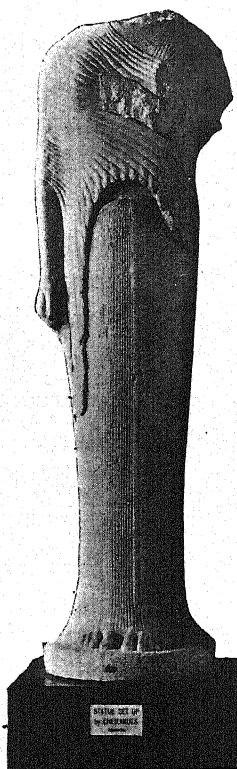
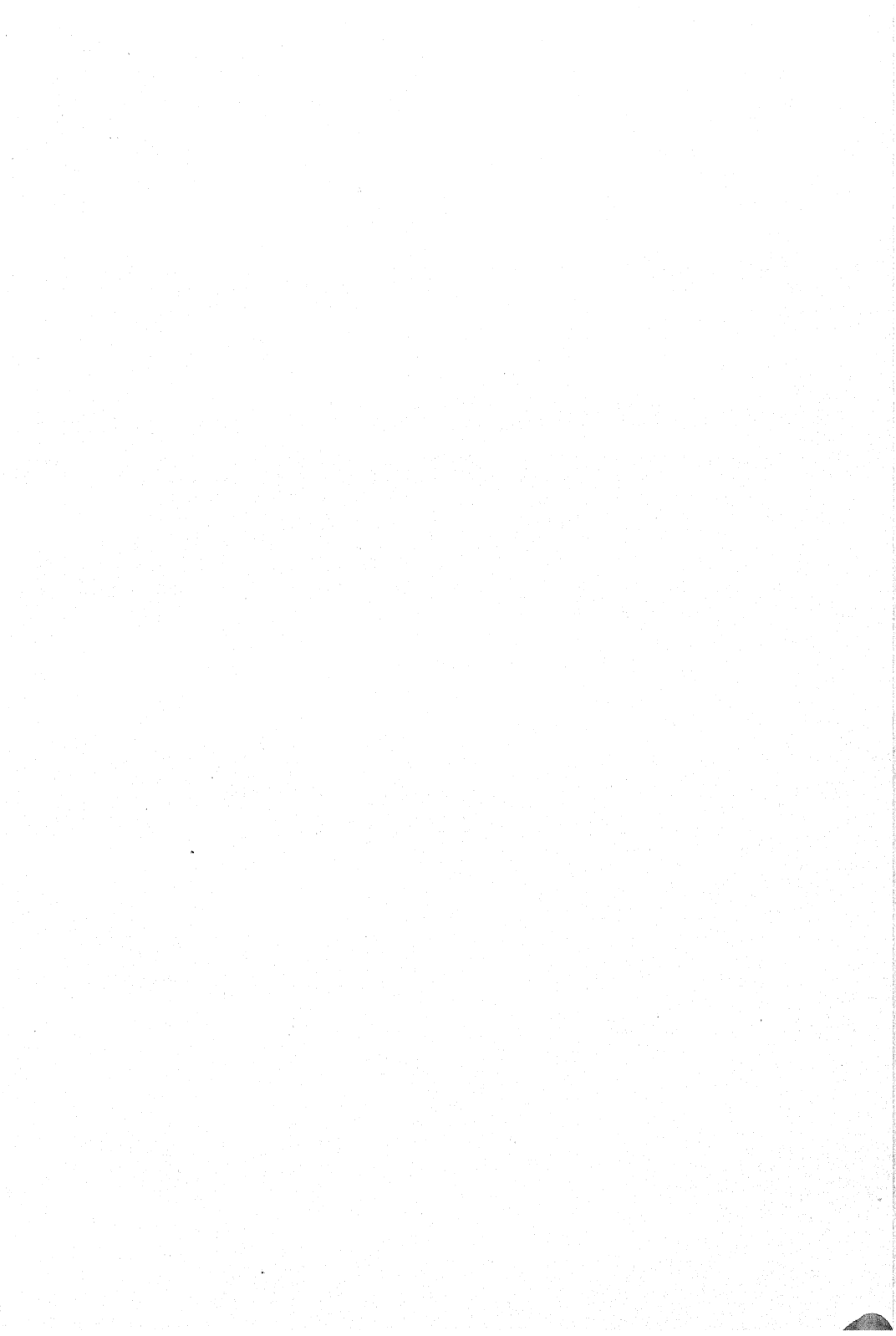


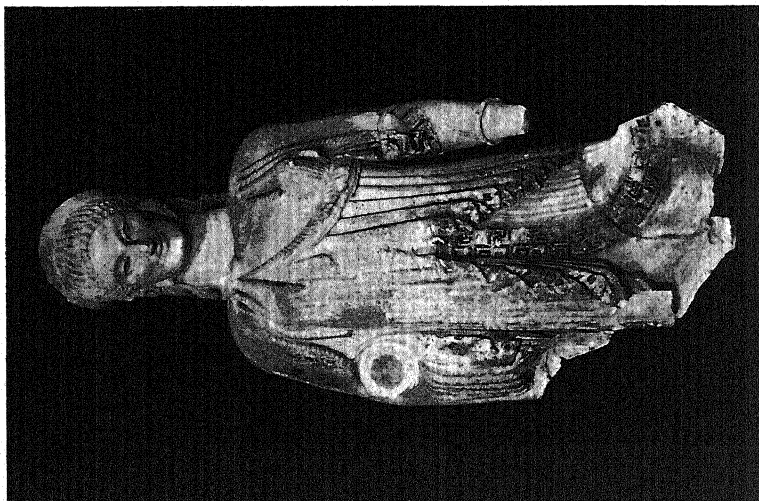
FIG. 350.—Life-size statue found near the Heræum in Samos. It bears an inscription stating that it was dedicated to Hera (Juno) by Cheramyes. The lower part is like a circular column or tree trunk. About 550 B.C. Louvre Museum.

certain areas, and existing quite independently of the

racés that may successively occupy the lands.⁶¹ Mr. L. R. Farnell, in his five large volumes on *The Cults of the Greek States*, has shown what a number and variety of facts have to be studied before we can attempt to arrive at any conclusion on so difficult a subject. Therefore we must be content merely to notice how an apparently indigenous and ever recurring desire for representations of a nude female form, although repressed for a time, broke forth again with increased intensity, thus causing a special development of plastic art by Greek sculptors when they had overcome the technical difficulties connected with that form.

At first the nude female type found no acceptance among the Aryan speaking migrants from the north; all their earliest representations of a goddess are draped (Figs. 343 and 348). Nor could they depart entirely from the tree trunk form (Figs. 349 and 350), which probably was hallowed in the minds of their own people by long association. This form indeed enabled them to indicate with some success the folds of drapery by a conventional system of shallow parallel lines. If the limbs had been modelled in a more natural manner the folds would have presented a more difficult problem, for the ungainly skirt of the Asiatics and Cretans had now been superseded by garments suspended from the shoulders. They were fastened by those ancient safety-pins called fibulæ, which being characteristic of the north and mid-European civilisation have been so useful to





FIGS. 351 and 352.—Two of the numerous marble statues broken down in the Acropolis when the Persians sacked Athens (480 B.C.). These works, having been executed only a few decades previously, had not suffered by long exposure, and their burial has preserved not only all the details of the sculptor's touch but also much of the colouring given by the painter. The embroidery of the robe is elaborately rendered, the hair and the pupils of the eyes have a reddish tinge.

The base of Fig. 352 has been discovered. It shows that the statue was dedicated to Athena. By his experimental downward curving of the lips, the sculptor succeeded in giving a dignified expression to the face, befitting a votary of the virgin goddess. In all its details this statue shows the coming of a new era.

archæologists engaged in tracing its progress through various southern countries.

The graceful folds assumed by such robes contributed another factor to the many favourable influences that helped the development of sculpture during this period, but it was only by slow degrees and by many strange experiments that the Greek sculptors learned to reproduce those folds successfully. In the early Attic school of the sixth century there is an extraordinary elaboration and delicacy in the arrangement and treatment of drapery (Fig. 351). This arrangement "in its zigzag folds, and in the variety of texture in different parts, is a mass of conventions; but within the established schemes we often find here and there a piece of very careful study after nature. Here, as throughout the history of archaic art in Greece, freedom and accuracy of work in detail precedes any general advance towards freedom of type and of composition" (*Handbook of Greek Sculpture*, p. 168). Attica seems at that time to have been still in sympathy with its Ionian kindred in Asia Minor, loving luxury and hating simplicity. Then a better influence appears to have reached it from the Peloponnesus where the Dorian element was strong. The schools of Argos and of Sicyon practised a severe and simple style which had a strong effect upon the art of all the rest of Greece, striving to shape its better thoughts in stone. This statue from the Acropolis bears evidence of the restraining influence of an increased desire for truth in place of artificiality (Fig. 352).

It is not easy to assign any definite names to these early statues, nor can we even assume that all the female ones are deities. Only a few can be taken as representing Athena or Hera ; not many of them could be mistaken for Aphrodite. It is quite possible that some of them were merely stone substitutes for the living victims formerly offered to the gods. Or they may have represented worshippers who thus dedicated themselves symbolically to the service of their patron deity.

The Aryan influence seems to have been still strong enough to make the male deity more popular ; even Athena and Hera have something masculine in their nature. The nude and essentially feminine type of goddess does not commonly occur until much later. It blossomed out suddenly in the fourth century, apparently without any intermediate stage of development. That rapid evolution had, however, been rendered possible by a long course of study of the nude male form, to which we must therefore turn our attention.

Here again we have the same difficulty that we had with the female type. Of the male archaic statues there are indeed many more examples, but no other means of judging of their relative dates except their style, and a few rather untrustworthy indications such as allusions to them by ancient authors, or the shape of the letters of inscriptions upon them. One very striking characteristic of the series is that it seems to begin suddenly about the end of the

seventh century with fairly well-developed statues of life size. The absence of any connecting links between them and the votive figurines, and of any very crude work, such as we saw in Egypt, is perhaps due to the primitive statues having been made of wood, which soon decayed, or of bronze, which was subsequently broken up for the sake of the metal. It is well known that numbers of bronze statues were made by Phidias and other sculptors during the best period, and yet not one of them has survived. Many of the earlier stone figures seem to be imitations of bronze statues; they show the same avoidance of deep cuttings and projecting masses that is characteristic of the work of sculptors who have to trust their models to unskilful casters (Fig. 353).

However, it is also possible that the transition from



FIG. 353.—Crude Boeotian figures, about five feet high, carved in soft porous tufa. The relief is so high that they might almost be classed as statues in the round. An inscription states that they were dedicated by Amphalkes in memory of two friends, Dermys and Kitylus. The junction of the legs with the V-shaped abdomen resembles that of a modern articulated doll. Notice the gradual improvement in Figs. 355-6-7 up to 363 and 366. Found at Tanagra. Now in Athens.

figurines to life-sized statues was made abruptly in

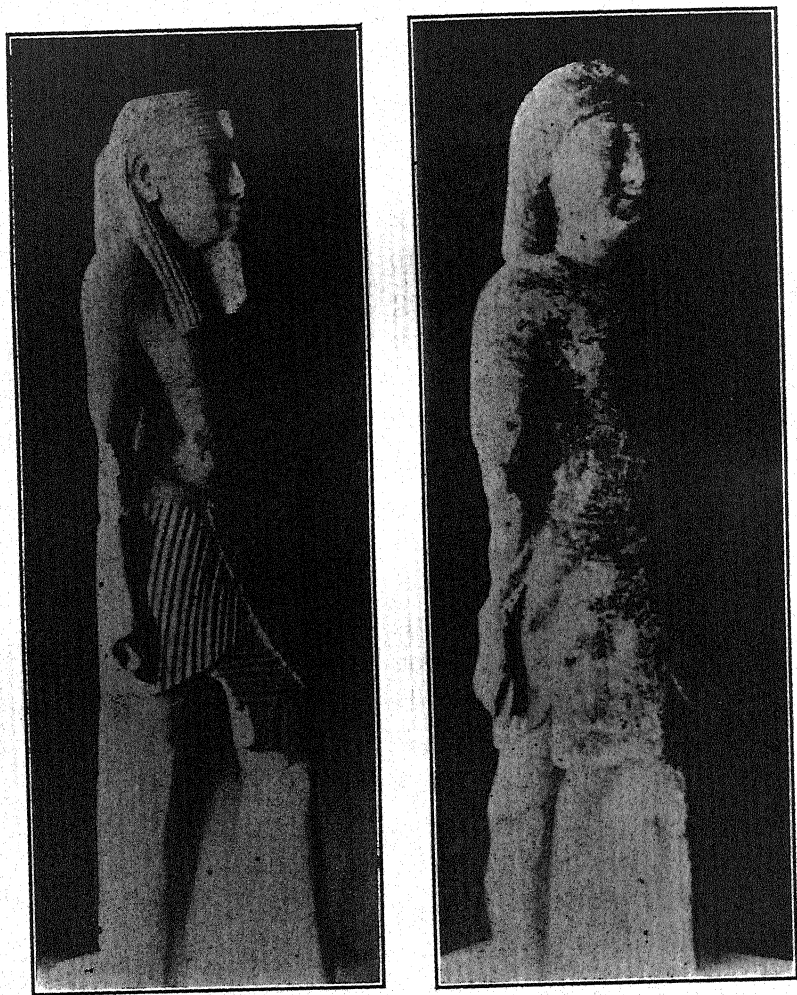
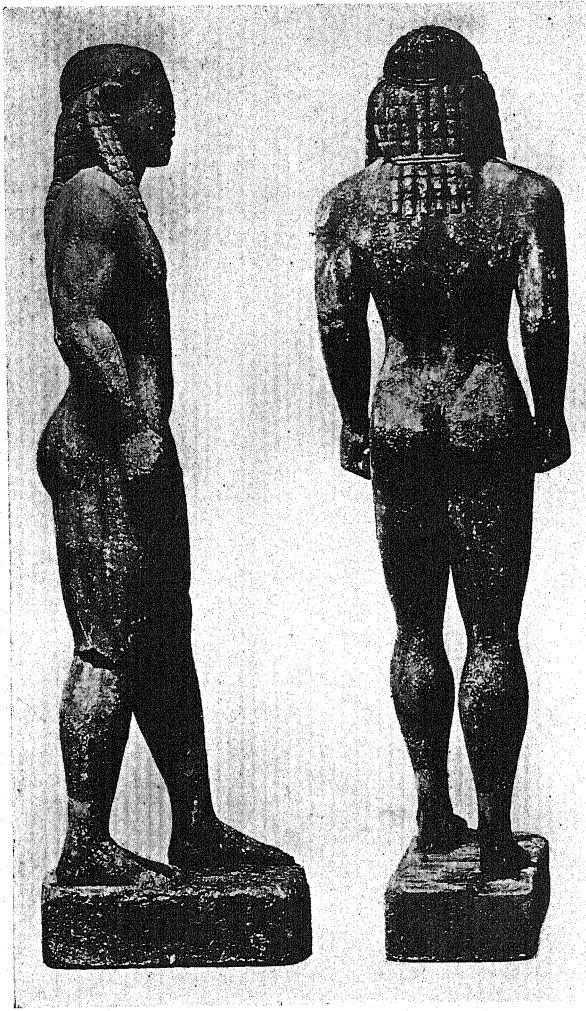


FIG. 354.—Two statuettes found at Naukratis. One was evidently made by or for an Egyptian, but the other shows the influence of the Greek spirit breaking away from tradition. University College.

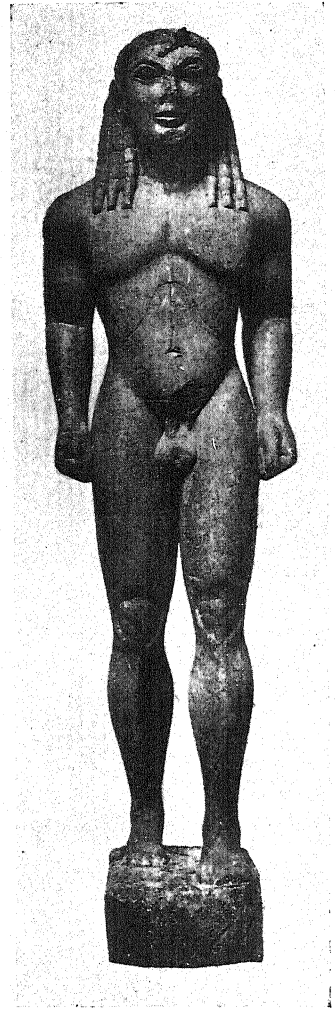
consequence of other changes affecting the general





a

b



c

FIG. 355.—This and another similar marble statue (rather larger than life size) were found at Delphi in 1893. They date from about 580 B.C., and have been supposed to represent Cleobis and Biton, whose memory was still treasured at that period. The story is that when they could not obtain oxen for the chariot of their mother, a priestess of Hera, they themselves dragged it several miles to the temple at Argos. She prayed that they might receive the goddess' best gift; when they went to sleep they did not awake again. This legend seems to reflect the distress prevalent in Greece in the middle of the previous century and the discontent due to the spread of industrialism and the importation of foreign slaves.

life of the people. We have noticed that the invention of coining gold and silver into money had caused a great expansion of trade. Greece with its numerous natural harbours was an excellent basis for commercial ventures, and the Greeks took full advantage of the opportunities thus offered. Then in the latter half of the seventh century the Greeks were allowed to trade with Egypt as a reward for the help they gave Psammetichus in his revolt against his rivals. In that country they may have seen some of the finest works of art the world had yet produced, although the Egyptians themselves were then no longer capable of producing anything of any merit. But this new nation, sprung from the union of ancient cultured races with old untamed dwellers in the forest or the plain, had fine senses to perceive, and keen power to assimilate the essential elements of Egyptian art. Many of the statuettes dug up from the site of their colony on the Nile at Naukratis show how strongly the Greek craftsmen of that city were influenced by the study of Egyptian examples (Fig. 354), and that influence soon spread to the Ægean Islands and to the mainland of Greece.

This statue (Fig. 355), dug up by the French in the course of their deservedly successful explorations among the ruins of Delphi, bears the signature of an Argive sculptor, but in pose and in general style it conforms to the Egyptian canon. It is neither well proportioned nor delicately modelled; its face is coarse and inexpressive, but it is vigorous and alert. We

are tempted to imagine that the Peloponnesian sculptor had taken his inspiration, not from the later decadent Egyptian work, but from that of two or three thousand years before. We are forcibly reminded of Ranofer and of other statues of the fourth and fifth dynasties (Fig. 168).

But it differs from them in one important detail, a detail which marks a daring step in advance, and reveals the existence of qualities which placed the Greeks in the front rank of all the nations of the world. They dared to face realities—they refused to be the slaves of tradition; they accepted the natural consequences of their own professed beliefs. They believed that God made man in his own image; on that belief they acted when they made an image of their god, therefore they practised no concealment under a false pretence of decency.

Many other nations have asserted that they were created by a god, but they have been as ashamed of their own bodies as if they had been created by a devil. Nakedness was to them a sign of inferiority or degradation. This perversion of ideas was similar to that which still leads some people to estimate a man, not by what he is, but by the clothes and by the adornments he puts on. Hypocrisy and ostentation are fatal to all art; the habits of the early Greeks were fatal to hypocrisy and ostentation.

One great factor in bringing about this innovation, and in enabling it to be carried out successfully, was the practice which had grown up in the seventh

century of appearing naked in the Olympian games. This morally and physically healthy custom prevailed also in the public gymnasia where Greek youths and men acquired that corporal and mental excellence which gave them a just contempt for the barbarian, and ultimately enabled them to repel the attacks of his invading hordes.

CHAPTER XV

GREEK SCULPTURE

IN those days war gave greater stimulus to the desire for physical excellence than it gives now, when success depends more on forethought and combination than on personal strength or skill. It also tended by killing off the unfit to diminish the number of the physically inferior, for when death was dealt by keenly wielded swords and spears instead of by indiscriminating shells and bullets, it was the weakest who succumbed. Nor had the weak a much better chance of survival if they stayed at home, for even then they were liable to be massacred in cold blood by the enemy or to be slain in private quarrel by their own countrymen.

Among the Greeks this desire for bodily superiority had more chance of satisfaction than it had among the subjects of despotic kings who feared to see their people grow too strong. For in Greece the problem of good government was beginning to be solved. It was dimly perceived that a government ruling with the consent of the people was more beneficial to the community than one based on force alone. The actual form of government was not so important in their eyes, and the various tribes or

states of Greece called their rulers by many various names—kings, archons, councillors. Even the so-called tyrants were in many respects rather like the presidents of the modern South American republics. They seldom maintained their rule long after they had lost the confidence of their subjects.

But even in the states that were most free there always remained one difficulty, that of finding out whether those rulers still retained the consent that had been given—a difficulty which we moderns have not yet altogether solved. It is seldom that a community has any definite initiating will, therefore the early Greek rulers did not always before taking action attempt to ascertain the will of the people, but they generally tried by holding public meetings to secure its assent to what they had done. Hence arose the idea that a Greek state should not contain more men than a good speaker's voice could reach. Thus every free man besides being a warrior was also a politician, for he was strongly interested in all questions affecting the fortunes of his town. State affairs were not so very complicated in those tiny cities. The population of Croydon is now far larger than was that of Athens in its palmy days, even including all its slaves.

Before the Persian War there was but little national feeling, and each city strove to dominate or destroy its neighbours, regarding them as strangers, just as in mediæval Europe or in modern Italy, where even now the inhabitants of each town call other Italians foreigners. In those days a man's outlook and

experiences were narrow, but they were most intense. The acute penetrating character of Greek genius, like a sharp sword concentrating all its energy along a narrow line, may perhaps be due to the environment in which it was evolved, for to this political intensity of civic life was added the intensity of affection or of hatred cherished for private friends or foes. It is easy for a man to forgive his foes or to forget his friends if he very seldom sees them; but in those times his friends were near and dear, and he could see the faces of his foes scowling at him every day. He could not get away from them. In the temples, in the public baths, in the narrow streets, and in the market-place they met or jostled with him, and thus fanned the glowing embers both of love and hate. Each man's life was strangely public, and his history was known from his cradle to his grave. All his work was keenly criticised, and whether as mechanic, as artist, or as poet he would soon hear how his productions were appreciated or condemned.

There was none of that temptation to do slovenly work which comes from the feeling that its producer will never see or hear of it again, and that the purchaser does not always know or care whether the work is really good, but is chiefly anxious to be sure that it is the product of such and such a well-known maker. To the Greek it would have seemed strange that experts should discuss whether a picture should be classed as by Polygnotus and therefore worth ten thousand drachmæ, or by some unknown man and

therefore worth comparatively little. Such a reason would have seemed unreasonable to him. If the picture was good it was valuable, no matter who painted it. Art products were for enjoyment, not for docketing and hoarding like treasures in a miser's chest, useless to all, even to their vain possessor.

This leads us to consider the conditions under which the early Greek sculptors did their work, and the inducements held out to them to do it well. We have already noticed that they were employed chiefly by the state, and that the state generally acted in accordance with the will of the people. Just as the inarticulate nation found expression of its will through its rulers and of its strength through its generals, so it found expression of its feelings and emotions through its artists and its poets. They were all working for the welfare of the state, however much they might differ as to the means by which that welfare could be maintained. The remuneration of generals and of rulers, as well as that of artists and of poets, was fixed by custom. To offer their work to the highest bidder would have no more occurred to artists and poets than it did to the rulers and the generals. Even personal distinction was not very keenly sought after until shortly before the decadence. We see this with strange clearness in the case of the generals, for their names were not inscribed upon the monuments of victory until after the battle of Plataea, and then Pausanias was blamed for allowing it. As for special rewards in money, they would perhaps

have felt as much insulted by the offer as would a general of Japan.

In many ways the condition of sculptors in Greece resembled that of artist craftsmen in Japan under the old feudal daimonos. The feudal system is indeed a sort of crude socialism, and the free men of Greece also lived in a semi-socialistic condition—in Sparta even their meals were provided by the state. But this socialism did not sap personal independence; there can be a socialistic individualism if the balance is well kept. If perfect, it would be far more favourable to art than a system which renders a select few continually fearful lest they should lose what they possess, and leaves the great majority always uncertain whether they will be able to obtain anything at all.

Of course sculptors had private patrons too, but the statues that these patrons paid for were not shut up in private houses. They were placed in the temples as offerings to the gods or exhibited as memorials in the agora and other public places, where they were subject to comparison with all the other sculptors' work. Thus every artist had a fair chance of his productions being seen and appreciated. The certainty of criticism restrained any very popular man from producing hurried, inferior work to satisfy ignorant or debased tastes. As the patrons had only a slight sense of ownership of the statues they had paid for, there was but little temptation to offer extravagant prices. Consequently artists were not

led to believe that the proper reward for their labour should be an extra amount or quality of food, raiment, and luxuries.

Their social position does not indeed seem to have been very high, but is a high social position necessarily so congenial to men of artistic temperament as to be a suitable or desirable reward? Would Shakespeare have done better work if he had been the friend of millionaires and kings? The wives perhaps do sometimes desire that sort of recompense. In this way the female may be said to have an influence on art, stimulating a man to efforts to improve his own position instead of assisting in the general progress of art. It is sad, but very natural, under our competitive commercial system. The wife would only have the reflected glory of her husband's success, while she would have a very tangible share of his improved income. Until woman becomes economically independent and can make her own position for herself, she will, as a rule, stimulate her men folk to work for results which correspond to ingrained feminine ideals produced by long ages of economic subjection. That a wealthy man should take a fancy for her has always appeared to the female as almost the only road to luxury or distinction, and naturally she imagines that if such a man would take a fancy to her husband's productions it would be a noble road to fortune and success.

It is difficult to get away from the usages and convictions of one's own day. The merely wealthy

buyer has in modern times had such an overpowering influence on the worker's fate, that the hope of patronage by some Mæcenas appears like a lode-star to an artist instead of as an *ignis fatuus* luring him to his doom.

The Greek sculptor was not only fairly free from mean hindrances and sordid inducements, not only was his mental picture of the human form in graceful pose or rapid motion constantly refreshed by seeing the finest specimens of manly strength and beauty rhythmically exercising their nude bodies in the open air, but he was also inspired by high ideals and surrounded by men in sympathy with his noblest aspirations. The whole Greek nation was saturated with a firm belief in the constant presence of its gods and in the reality of their existence as perfect human beings.

Each city-state, too, believed that it was under the special protection of some god or goddess. As the Greek visualised his city in the same way that he visualised other abstract conceptions—that is, in human form—the god soon became the ideal embodiment of the city, and the city the material embodiment of the god. Hence each free citizen became a part of the living body of a deity; in it were centred all his hopes and fears, and thus the faint rays of individual action were concentrated into one burning focus of intensity.

When we use the word *incorporated* with regard to our own cities, it brings no definite picture before

our mental eyes, but to the Greek the vision was definite and true; therefore his sculptors strove to realise it in marble and in bronze. Like all true artists, they were well aware of the difficulty—nay, the impossibility—of realising an ideal; they also knew that high aims could not be reached without careful study of each detail, so that they might recognise their limitations and their possibilities.

Thus in that Argive statue (Fig. 355), we see they had not dared to break with the conventions of antiquity. The pose is rigid and symmetrical; no other way could they as yet conceive of showing strength and dignity. Only the chief muscles are well modelled, the contours of the smaller ones are hardly shown at all; the veins are not even indicated. An incised line shows where the false ribs end; a strange convention, reminding us of the palæolithic habit of drawing incised lines upon a carving to supplement its evident deficiencies.

During that wonderful sixth century, the traditional age of the Seven Sages, when democracy began to triumph over privilege and philosophy weakened the power of priestcraft, when infantry learned the value of discipline and co-operation, and thus, together with the common sailor-man prepared the way for victories not only over Persia, but also over Carthage and the rich Etruscan lords—during all that fervid period of rapid evolution the seeds of art were thrusting their way deep into the congenial soil of Greece. Schools of sculpture were springing up all

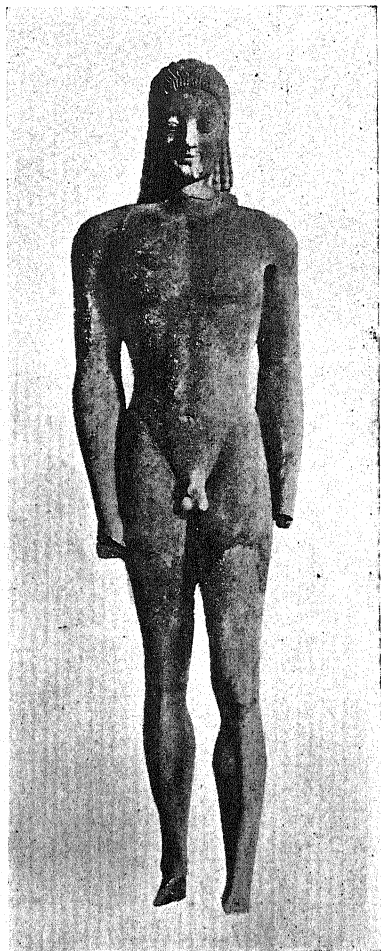
over the mainland and in the islands of the archipelago, each having some distinctive feature by which its products may still be recognised.

It would take too long to give even a brief account of all these various schools, nor do the battered fragments that have been dug up offer many striking examples for illustrating their rise and progress. This statue (Fig. 356), found in an old cemetery not far from Athens, gives some idea of the style of the early Attic school. Its date is probably about 530 B.C., some fifty years later than that heavy Argive figure. In its modelling and in its proportions it shows a distinct improvement, but the sculptor's memory was still unable to retain the fleeting curves of mobile lips, and he gave them the ordinary "archaic smile," which seems to us unmeaning. To the statues of the gods this smile was perhaps intentionally given, in order to influence them to regard their worshippers with that same benignant feeling which the sculptor had done his utmost to express.

The eyes are not so large and staring as in the Argive statue, but they are still too prominent, standing out almost on a level with the brow. The custom of painting their statues, or of inserting coloured stones to represent the eyes, probably prevented the early Greeks from recognising that it is not so much the eye itself which gives expression as its position and surroundings. It was only after many experiments, such as making them too large or very prominent, or even placing them obliquely (Fig. 351), that



b



a

FIG. 356.—Marble statue found in a burial-ground between Athens and Laurium in 1900. The flame-like rendering of the hair is peculiar. The statues shown in Figs. 355, 356, and 357 belong to a very large series of nude male figures having all a similar pose and ranging from nine feet high to rather less than life size. They used to be designated as "Apollos," but to most of them there is no reason for assigning that name. They are now considered as being generally memorials of athletes. Athens National Museum.



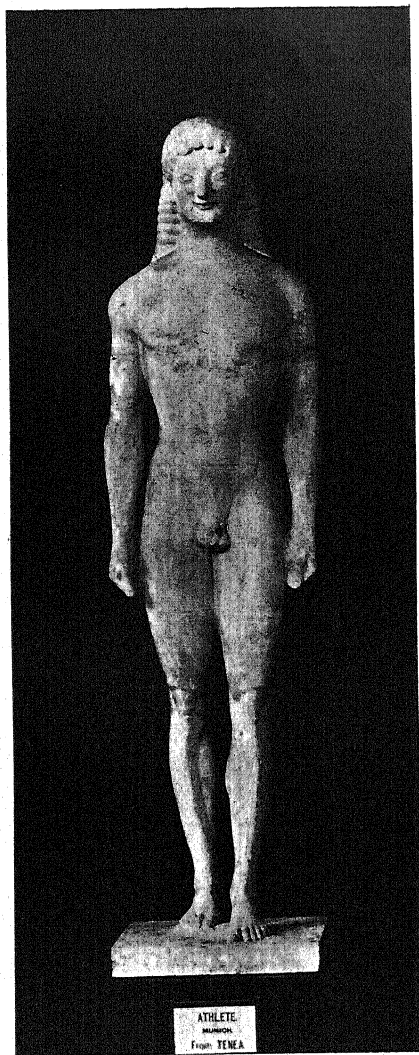
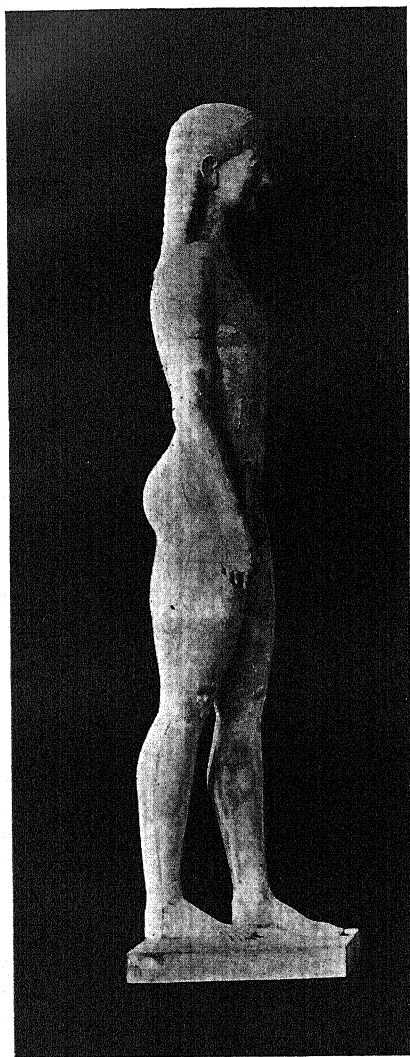


FIG. 357.—Marble statue found in 1846 at the foot of the Acrocorinth on the site of the ancient city of Tenea. It is probably contemporary with or perhaps slightly earlier than Fig. 356. Though it is of rather better execution, the sloping shoulders, narrow abdomen, and hesitating pose do not seem to justify the claims made for it by the admirers of "ruler art." Munich Glyptothek.

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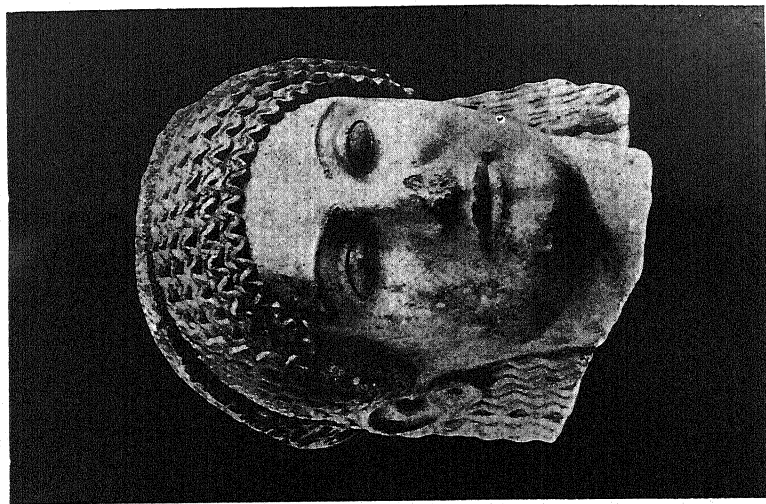
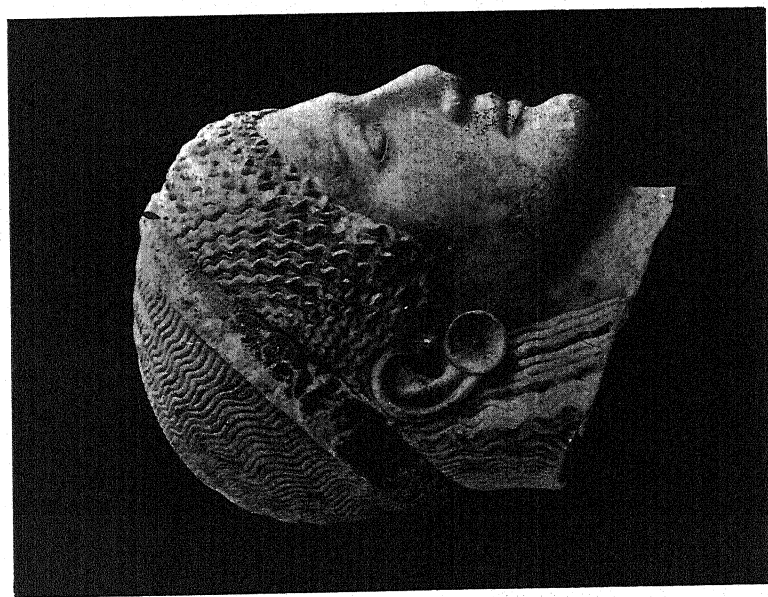


FIG. 358.—This head is of a rather more advanced type than most of the other draped female statues buried in the Acropolis. The right arm and shoulder have been recovered, but not the base, on which an inscription might have rendered its identification possible. Acropolis Museum, Athens.

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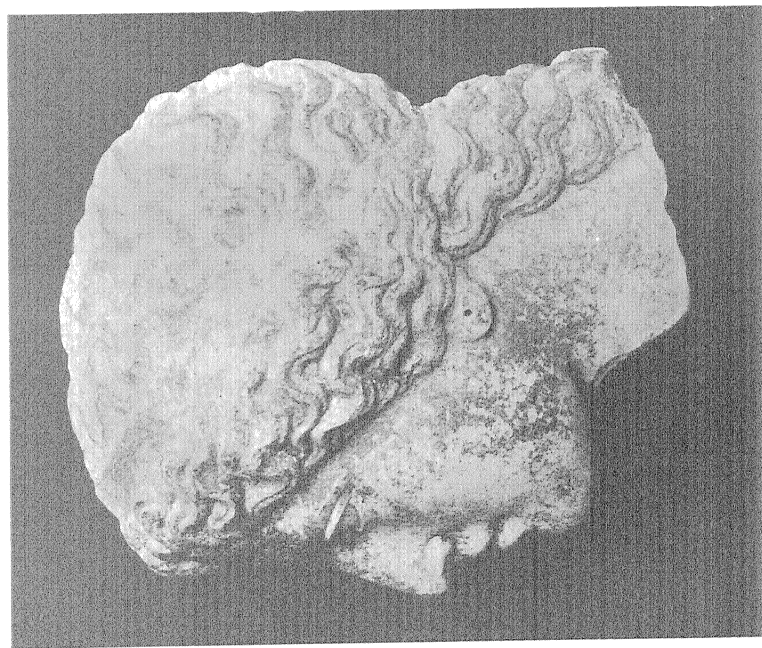
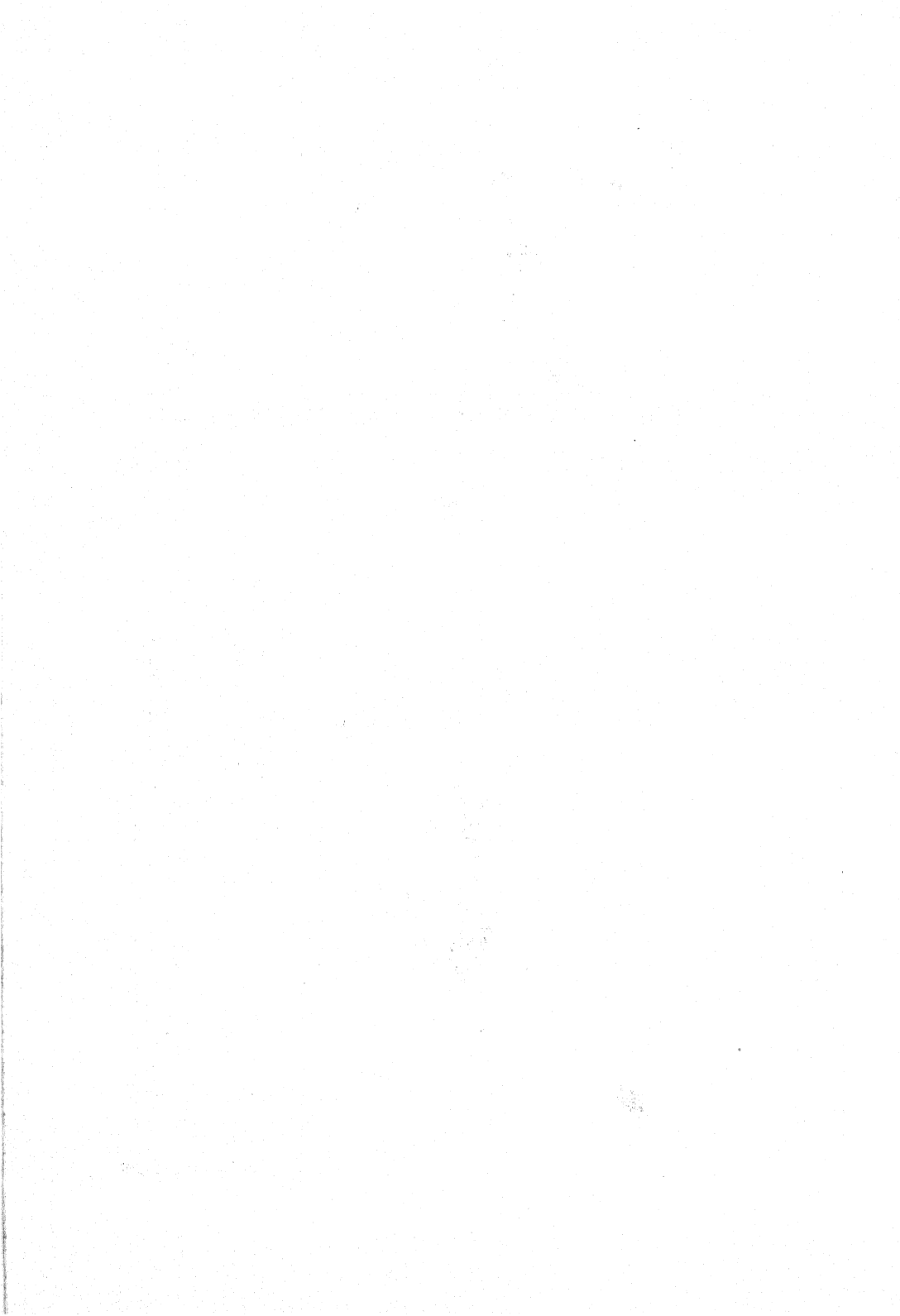


FIG. 359.—Marble head, about two-thirds life size, found in the Heraeum near Argos. Executed about 430 B.C., probably by one of the Argive sculptors who had come under Attic influence. National Museum, Athens.



FIG. 360.—Head of the Hermes (Fig. 368) found in the Heraeum at Olympia. Date about 350 B.C.



they learned to give them life by setting them further back beneath an overhanging brow (Fig. 359). This is very marked in the head of Hermes (Fig. 360), which shows how Praxiteles solved the problem in the fourth century.^{61a} That device was not adopted suddenly. There are many examples of their tentative efforts in this direction. By comparing Fig. 358 with Figs. 356 and 357, the good effect will be noticed of even a slight advance towards a naturalistic rendering of eyes and eyebrows. The change of position is seen more plainly in the profile, and we might wonder why the unreal appearance of the earlier profiles had not long ago brought the Greek sculptors to adopt such a simple remedy. There are perhaps two reasons for their delay. In the first place, the profile appearance of sculptures in the round was at that time regarded as of but slight importance. Their chief attention was given to the frontal view, which was the only one appealing strongly to their fellow-men. Also, if a sculptor had noticed that the profile of his work was quite unnatural, it would not have disturbed him greatly. His efforts were directed towards producing an impression on the mind of the beholder, and he would have disdained the idea of making a slavish realistic copy of the human form. Realism is in the present day often confused with naturalism, although indeed mere realism is but as the lifeless body of an art, and can convey no message to mankind. Expression is the essence of all art, as subtle and intangible as is the breath of life in man.

—so subtle that the weights and scales of realism are utterly fallacious as a help to reach our goal. Naturalism is useful as a standard of comparison, and is a wholesome check on false or wildly rash expression.

The Greek sculptor trained his mental eyes by studying all the varying forms of living things, and then he strove to reproduce these forms as the expression of his ideas. If to some slight extent they gave the impression he desired, he noted the result; but when the frontal view was not successful it is not likely that he would have turned round to the side to seek the causes of his failure. Yet, on the other hand, when he had found that a deeper setting of the eye gave better expression to his work, he probably also noticed that the profile was now more natural, and thus he felt encouraged to continue the experiment. This intermediate stage is seen in that head (Fig. 358) wrought by an Attic sculptor shortly before Athens was sacked (480 B.C.) by ruthless Asiatic hordes.

Perhaps that artist lived to see the destruction of his beloved city at the command of haughty Xerxes, enraged at the opposition of a vulgar mob of Westerners—poor, unrefined, and ignorant. No self-respecting tyrant could brook the insolence of men who dared to claim the right to rule themselves, who cherished subversive notions about the right divine of kings. Little did Xerxes, or the unrecorded sculptors whose work he overthrew, dream that the gods had

guided his devastating hand to give only a temporary death to those crude products of immature genius still struggling to be free. The statues which he had overthrown and desecrated were afterwards buried deep beneath the ground when the victorious citizens of Athens returned in triumph and, feeling still greater confidence in the protection of the gods, restored their grand Acropolis in still greater glory.

Thus the work of those humble searchers after truth has lived, and we can see the fragments of it, wrought by their own patient hands. Of the works of their illustrious successors—of Phidias, of Polyclitus, of Praxiteles, who in spirit and in deed built upon their ruins—hardly a single example has survived. The actual bronzes, and the very marble endowed with life by those Promethean hands, have disappeared, and it is chiefly through the uncertain medium of later copies that we can discern the greatness of our loss. How strange is fate! The perfect growth, the ripe fruit of centuries of effort, has all but disappeared, while the roots from which it sprang have been preserved.

The victories of Marathon and Salamis mark the passing of the Greeks from childhood into youth, and their sculpture also witnesses the same swift, mysterious change. Its period of tutelage is over; its bondage to Egypt and the East is broken. To the everlasting wonder of the world, it strikes out an independent path and strides forth with giant steps. In the Titanic struggle for physical and for mental liberty,

the Greek nation perished as a ruling race, just as the Spartan heroes perished in the battle of Thermopylæ, but none the less the glory of the victory was theirs. Henceforward the preponderance of Eastern force was to be balanced by the new-born strength of Europe.

In both cases the contest was between two principles, which, although seemingly opposed, are still essential to the welfare of the human race. It does not much matter how they may be called, the tendency of each will always be the same. Tyranny and liberty, conservatism and progressiveness, anarchism and socialism, mere custom and pure reason, faith and free thought, inertia and energy, are all the outcome of two fundamental qualities. Men spend their lives in the vain effort to suppress the one or to exterminate the other ; but the complete victory of either would be fatal to the world. The real difficulty is to keep the balance, to adjust the right proportion of the influence they should wield.

Professor O. Montelius has well summed up the character of the two divisions of the world : " If we compare Europe with the East typologically, we find much greater vivacity in our part of the world than in the East. In Europe we see a greater variety of shapes, an activity and love of change, which, in most cases, are connected with practical improvements. Consequently we have a more rapid development, which contrasts strangely with the conservatism of the East, where the ancient shapes

may remain unaltered for thousands of years. The richness of the materials used in the East is not a good equivalent for the wealth of variety in shape in Europe. This typological contrast is noticeable in very early times, and has always persisted. It is intimately connected with that difference in character of the races which has been of such importance in their development, and therefore so decisive for their history and their mutual relations, even up to the present time."

The sense of balance and proportion which was felt so strongly by the Greeks kept them from rushing to extremes in the first full tide of their success. Although Western ideals were for the time triumphant, mankind was not sharply divided then, any more than it is now, into two separate sections, each endued only with the one or with the other of these two fundamental qualities. There were advocates of tyranny in Greece itself as well as advocates of liberty, and when the foreign danger was removed, internal struggles caused the partisans to segregate to various centres.

In Sparta the main current of ideas had long ago set strongly towards conservatism. In his desire to maintain the privileges of his own narrow caste, the Spartan had sacrificed his home, his liberty, all luxury, all poetry, all art. For the sake of life he had given up all that makes life worth living, and when history begins "we find her (Sparta) under an iron discipline, which invades every part

of a man's life, and controls all his actions from his cradle to his deathbed. Everything is subordinated to the art of war, and the sole aim of the state is to create invincible warriors. The martial element was doubtless, from the very beginning, stronger in Sparta than in other states; and as a city ruling over a large discontented population of subjects and serfs, she must always be prepared to fight; but we shall probably never know how, and under what influences, the singular Spartan discipline which we have now to examine was introduced."—Bury, *History of Greece*, vol. i. p. 157.

In Athens, on the other hand, among the free citizens, mere personal liberty was perhaps much overrated, but for a time it gave them scope for development. Although ultimately they were unsuccessful, and were crushed by the iron heel of Sparta, there is no doubt which city has best deserved to win the whole world's gratitude and praise.

Of course this personal liberty was not enjoyed by the whole population. The free citizens of Athens were like the rest of the world up to quite recent times, totally unconscious of the danger and injustice of slave-holding. They could no more conceive of a world without slave-owners than we can conceive of a world without property owners, and they had equally good grounds for their convictions.

It is difficult to select examples to illustrate the rapid progress of sculpture during the fifth century—the golden age of Attic art. There are innumer-





FIG. 361.—Life-size bronze statue of a charioteer found at Delphi. Fragments of horses were also dug up, and a basis recording the dedication of the group by Polyzalus, a brother of Hiero, king of Syracuse. It was perhaps the work of the Attic sculptor, Calamis, who was considered to rival Phidias and in some respects even Praxiteles. He flourished about 470-450 B.C.

able fragments showing every stage of development, but very few even fairly complete statues (Fig. 361). Most of the Greek statues exhibited in modern galleries are copies, for which we have to be grateful to wealthy Romans and various ancient rulers. Nearly all the originals have disappeared, but so many copies were made in the decadent period that a sufficient number have survived to give us some idea of the real work of Greek sculptors during the spring and summer of their glory. As the patrons of these copyists had but little artistic discrimination, copies of the same statue may vary considerably; they are therefore not very trustworthy. However, by industriously collating the authentic fragments and comparing them with the copies, learned experts have made the history of the period fairly clear for those who care to undertake a special study of it.

One of the works recorded as having been executed shortly after the re-occupation of Athens in 480 B.C., is a group representing the tyrannicides, Harmodius and Aristogiton. The Athenians commissioned two sculptors, Critius and Nesiotes, to make this group to take the place of the two bronze figures, set up some thirty years before, which had been carried off by Xerxes. Why he should have taken a fancy for those tyrant slayers is not quite clear; the subject could hardly have appealed to him, and the treatment of it must have seemed rather barbaric to the luxurious Persians. They did not retain them very long, for

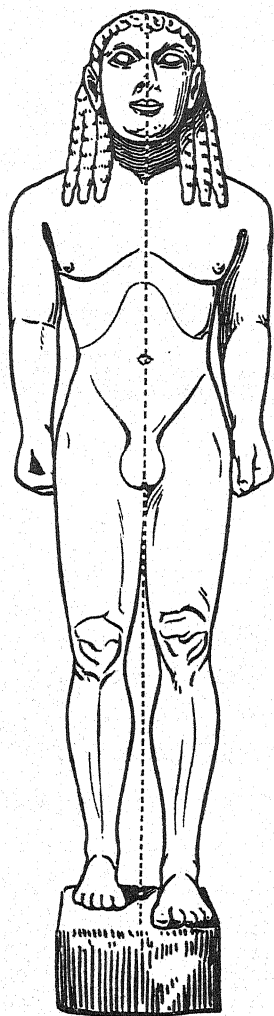
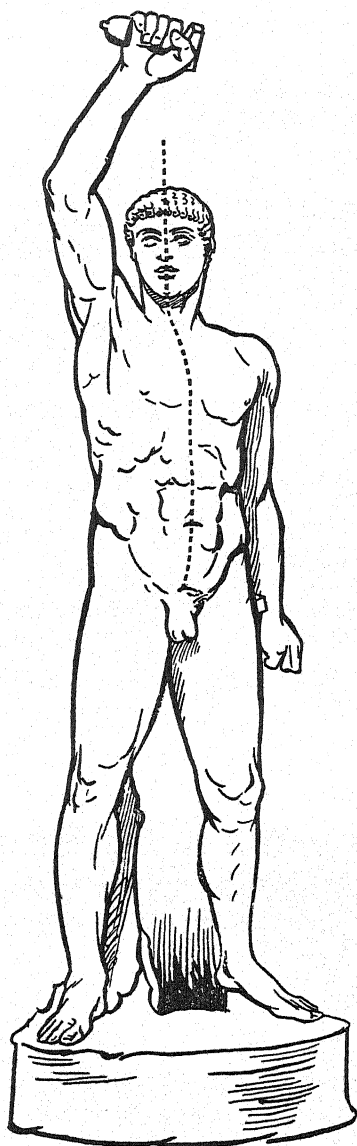
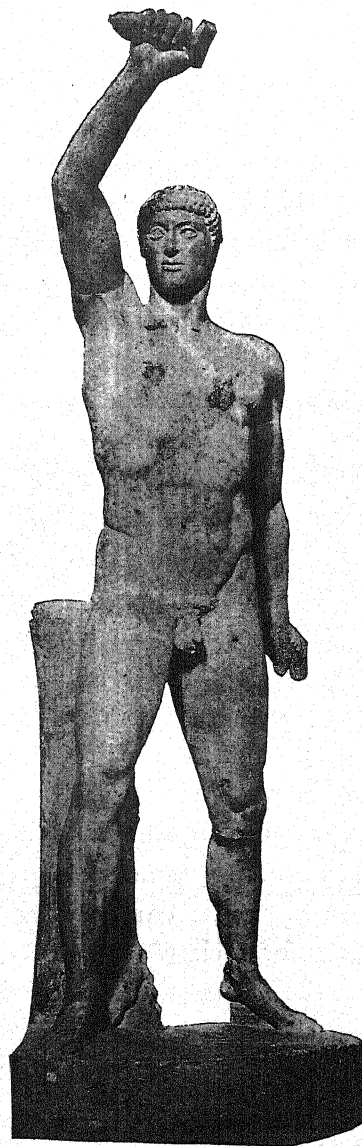


FIG. 362.—Outline drawing of the Argive statue from Delphi (Fig. 355) with the median plane dotted to show the rigid symmetry and “frontality” of these earlier works.



a



b

FIG. 363.—Life-size marble copy of the statue of Harmodius, who with Aristogiton slew the tyrant Hipparchus at Athens. The sculptors of the original group helped to slay the tyrant custom which for so many centuries had imposed its “frontal” law upon mankind. Naples Museum.

in less than two centuries the figures were brought back triumphantly to Athens and placed by the side of their substitutes.

A probable copy of the group made by Critius and Nesiotes was reconstituted a few years ago by Friedrichs from two statues in the Naples Museum, which had been mistakenly restored and arranged as two combatants fighting one another. Fig. 363 represents Harmodius. Comparing it with Fig. 356, we can well see what a wonderful improvement the Attic sculptors had made in those fifty years of stress and storm. The details of muscles and veins are more accurately rendered, and there is no longer that pinching in of the waist and lower part of the chest which is so noticeable in the earlier statues, and seems like a reminiscence of Egyptian, or perhaps even of Cretan, work.⁶² (See Fig. 177 and Fig. 293). The head is still rather archaic, especially as regards the eyes and the hair. How to represent hair was always a puzzle to early sculptors; they sometimes reproduced it realistically on their bronze figures, but a conventional form was absolutely necessary for their work in stone.

The greatest change of all is, however, in the pose of the figure, a change which marks a definite breaking away from that old law of frontality by which, consciously or unconsciously, all previous work had been regulated, and by which the work of all primitive people is still controlled.

It was a Danish Professor—Julius Lange of

Copenhagen—who discovered this important law and gave it a name. Like many of the so-called “laws” of nature, it is so simple that it seems almost obvious. In statues that conform to it “an imaginary plane through the top of the head, the nose, the spine, the sternum, the navel and the sexual organs” will be perfectly straight, and the legs will follow the direction of this plane (Fig. 362). The figure may bend forwards or backwards, may be kneeling or sitting, one arm or leg may be advanced, but these positions are always influenced by the frontal law, which demands that the median plane shall be quite straight (*Darstellung des Menschen in der älteren Griechischen Kunst* (1899)). Previous to 500 B.C. there are scarcely any exceptions to that rule. It was rigorously observed throughout the world, but in this statue of Harmodius it is ignored, and the median plane curves slightly to the left (Fig. 363).

As long as sculptors were subject to this law they had to plan the head as facing to the front; it must not turn to the right nor to the left, and no sideway flexion of the body was allowable. It prevented the sculptor from representing any but the most simple actions; it rendered any combinations of figures impossible, except such combinations as would imply not much more relation of the individual members to one another than there is in a row of soldiers.

Having emancipated themselves from the rule of frontality, the Greeks were able to make those

wonderful combinations of figures in the pediments of their temples which have never been surpassed



FIG. 363-*bis*.—One of many copies of Myron's Discobolus, well identified by the description of it written by Lucian, who had been trained as a sculptor in his early days. It was a marvellous product for a period of transition (about 480 to 450 B.C.), "when sculpture was gradually freeing itself from the trammels of archaic stiffness and approaching that perfection of technical skill which was essential for its highest development."—(E. A. Gardner's *Handbook*.)

or even equalled. It took them, however, some time to learn how to overcome another difficulty—the difficulty of rendering accurately the transition

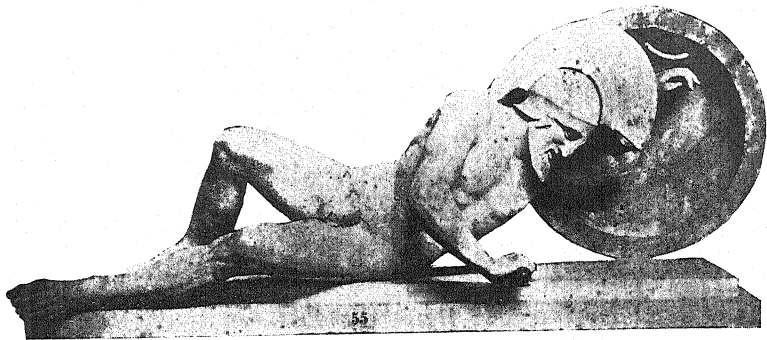


FIG. 364-a.—Dying warrior. From the east pediment of the temple on the island of Ægina. Probably one of the many sculptures executed shortly after the triumph of the Greeks over the Persians (480-470 B.C.). Now at Munich.

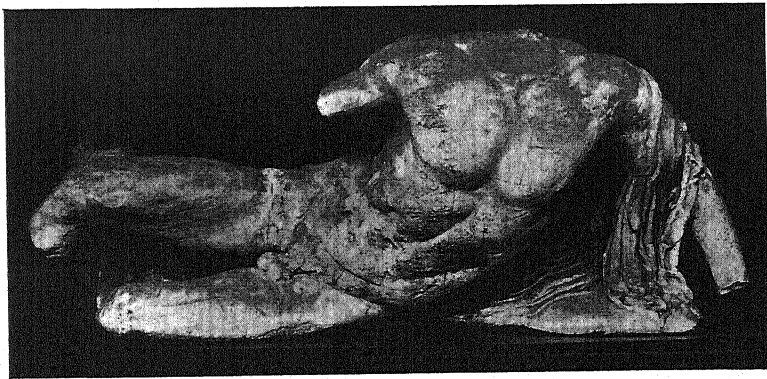
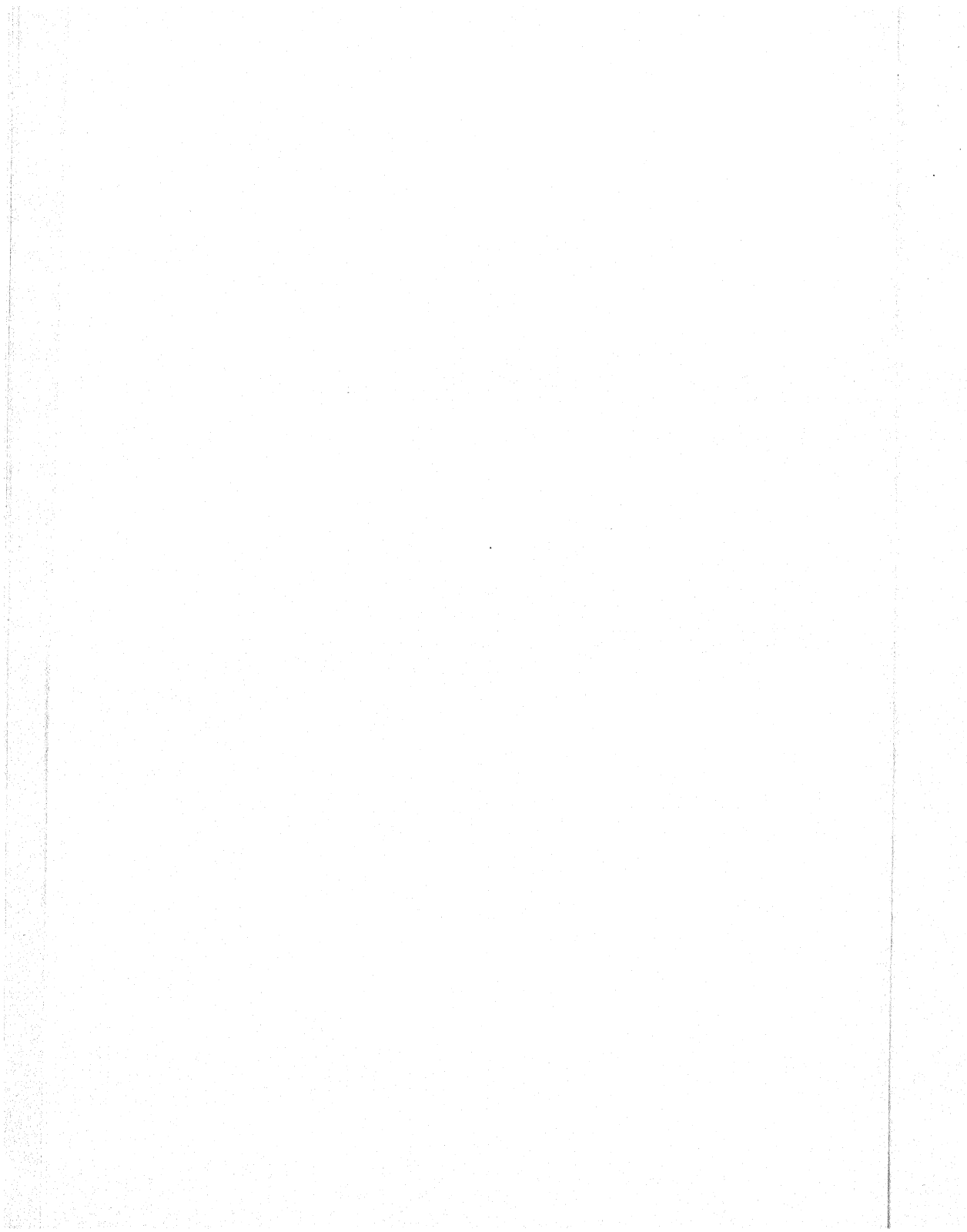


FIG. 365-a.—Cephissus (often called Ilissus), a river god. From the west pediment of the Parthenon. About 450 B.C. Now in the British Museum.



from full face to profile in statues like that of the Discobolus (Fig. 363-*bis*) or the dying warrior (Fig. 364).

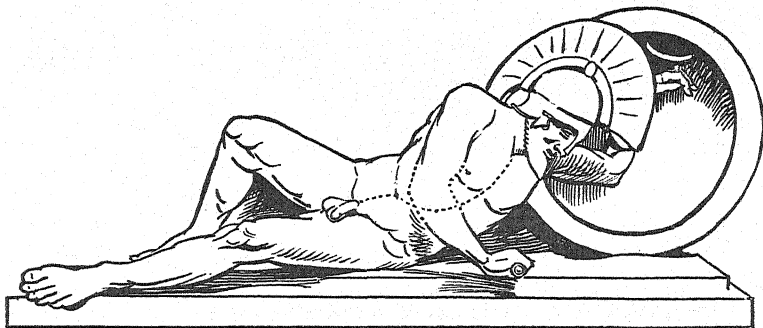


FIG. 364-*b*.—By covering the right-hand half of Fig. 364-*a* or *b*, it will be easily seen that the lower part of the statue would fit on better to the body of a man facing upward or forward. The sculptor had acquired a good mental picture of the appearance of a man's chest and of his legs and waist, but they were separate conceptions and he could not piece them together naturally in this position.

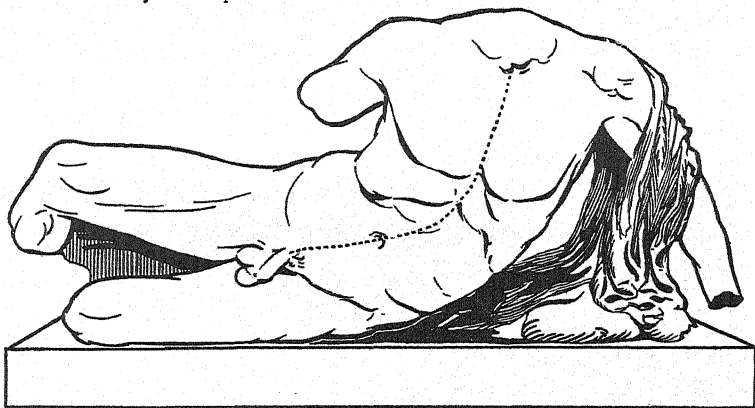


FIG. 365-*b*.—The Egyptians and the Assyrians never solved this problem, but the Greeks experimented continually until they had overcome the difficulty. The dotted lines show how the abrupt transition from chest to abdomen in Fig. 364 was remedied at a later period.

The twist of the body between the hips and the chest is too abrupt, although not nearly so bad as in the

Assyrian and Egyptian low reliefs, or in the earlier Greek sculpture. The defect will be more easily recognised by noting the median line through the navel and sternum to the throat of the warrior, and comparing it with the similar line drawn on the body of Cephisus (Fig. 365), where the transition is correctly rendered although this figure cannot be dated more than twenty or thirty years later than that of Discobolus or the warrior. It was indeed a part of that glorious composition on the west pediment of the Parthenon, which was executed by or under the influence of Phidias.

To study these pediments is said to be a liberal education for artists; to imitate them is the despair of sculptors. But even Phidias could not have obtained such marvellous results unless his predecessors had smoothed the path by which he strode to glory. Genius stands forth indeed like the peak of a giant mountain in calm, majestic solitude, but it rests upon the unseen masses which alone rendered its elevation possible.

The history of Art now becomes almost entirely the history of Athens. When her power was shaken and the walls of the Acropolis again were broken down, she had still sufficient psychic impetus to attain even a higher stage of art. Then, when complete disintegration of the state took place, and her scattered artists roamed the world in search of work, even in their decadence, and though forced to minister to vulgar and degraded tastes, they set a standard which the rest could never reach.

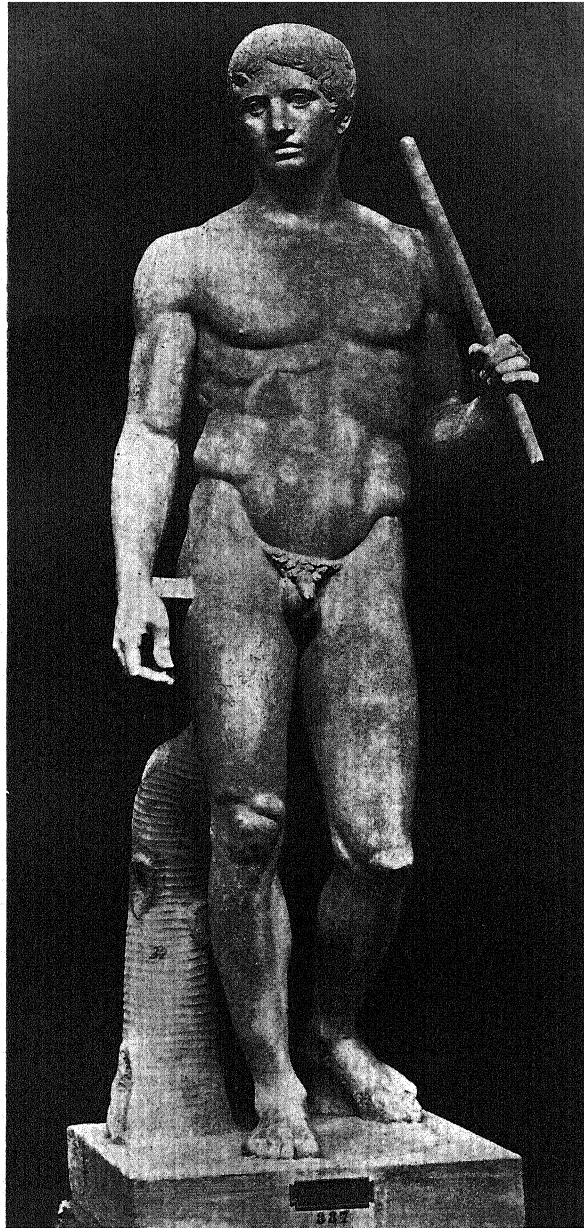
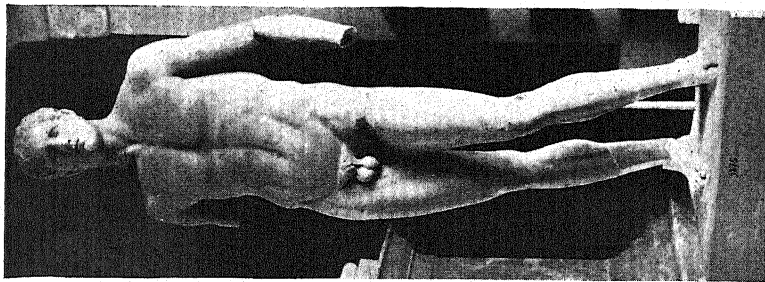
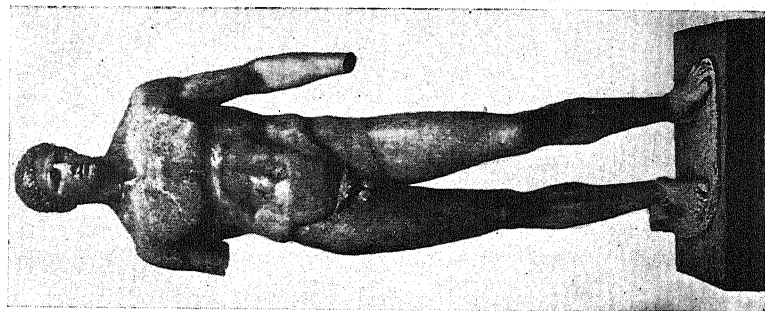


FIG. 366.—The Doryphorus (spear bearer). Marble copy (made in Roman times) of the bronze statue by Polyclitus (of the Argive school about 440 B.C.), and known as the Canon, because it embodied his conception of the male form in its most perfect development and also the system of proportion which he adopted as normal. Found at Pompeii; now in the Naples Museum.





a



b

FIG. 367.—One of a set of statues dedicated at Delphi by Daochus. It represents Agias, an ancestor who had been a victor in the Pancration (boxing and wrestling contests) at the Olympic games. It is probably a contemporary marble copy of a bronze statue by Lysippus. Notice the very different appearance of the statue in these two photographs taken from different points of view.

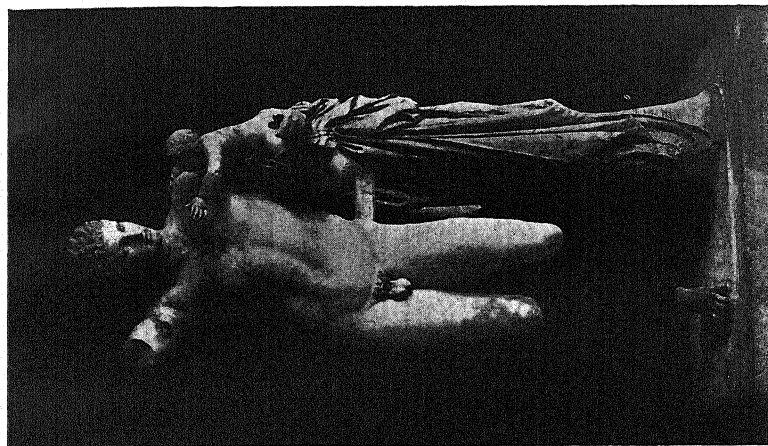


FIG. 368.—Marble statue of Hermes and the infant Dionysus by Praxiteles, Olympia. It is said that when Furtwängler was shown a photograph of this statue, taken shortly after its discovery, he asked, "Why did they leave that cloth hanging on it?"

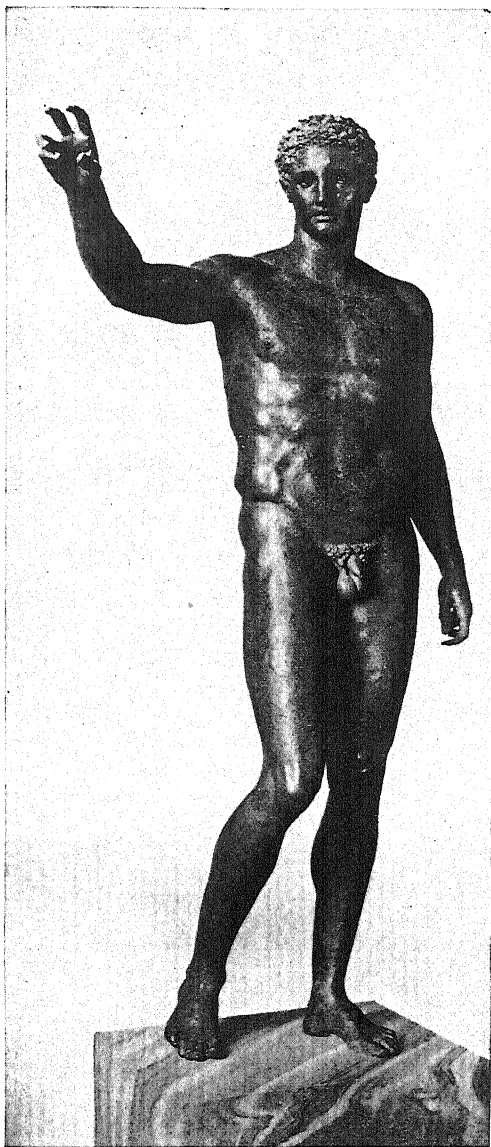
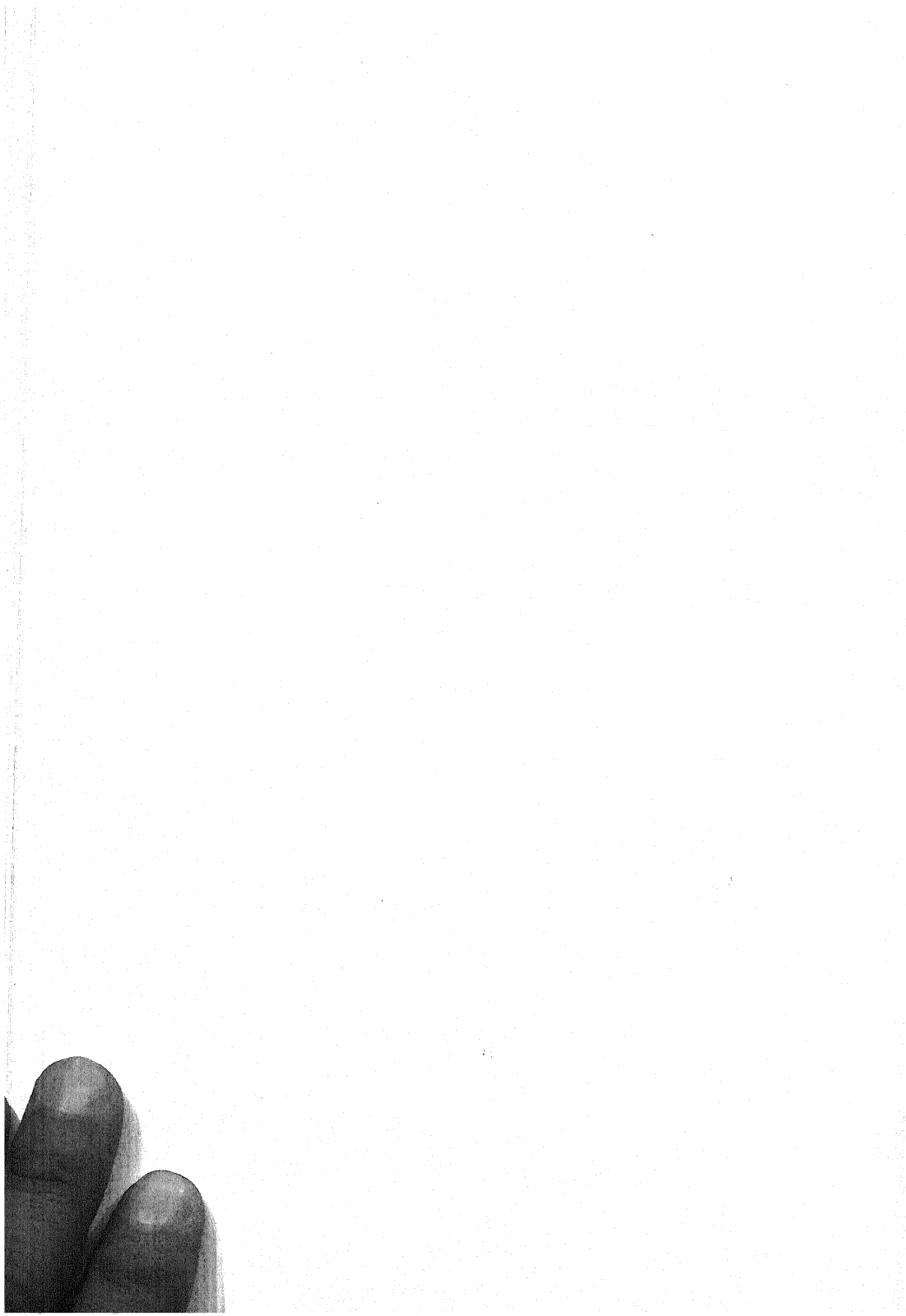


FIG. 369.—Bronze statue, perhaps representing Paris holding out the apple. The weak legs do not agree with the very muscular body; still it is a fine work, and dates from a period of which we have but few relics.

To face p. 442



It would be beyond the scope of this book to describe the further progress of Greek sculptors, but a few illustrations of their later work will be found useful for the purpose of comparison with the earlier productions of their countrymen, and with the results attained in Egypt and Chaldea. Fig. 366 is from a marble copy of a statue by Polyclitus; the original, made about 440 B.C., has disappeared along with all his other work. Fig. 367 is from one of the fine marble statues dug up by the French excavators at Delphi. It is probably a contemporary replica of a bronze figure of Agias, a victor in the Olympian games. The original was wrought by Lysippus, the court sculptor of Alexander the Great (356-323 B.C.). Fig. 368 is taken from the marble statue of Hermes and Dionysus by Praxiteles (about 350 B.C.), one of the few statues that are undoubtedly by the hand of that great master. Fig. 369 is bronze and is interesting as a perfect specimen, but it is of later period, probably about 300 B.C., when art was beginning to decline. It was dredged up in 1900 from a ship that was wrecked off the Greek island of Cerigotto or Anti-Kythera about 2000 years ago. Apparently the vessel was on its way to Rome, laden with old statues and other treasures for those energetic wealthy rulers, who could enforce tribute from the whole world, but could not awaken the dead soul of art.

CHAPTER XVI

GREEK PAINTING

ALL the art products that we have hitherto examined, whether of the sculptor or the painter, owed their origin to certain definite desires quite unconnected with any longings for mere beauty. They seem to show that up to a certain point man's conception of beauty was conditioned by and grew with the satisfaction of those desires. If an artist's work gave pleasure by indirectly satisfying physical or even merely imaginary wants, it was beautiful; if not, it was ugly. Then as those wants became less gross, less selfish, and less fanciful, art satisfied them by other forms, which, giving pleasure, in their turn became considered beautiful. Thus gradually and unconsciously a standard was set up by which all outward forms were tested. Just as in physiology a healthy taste means a taste unconsciously developed during the lapse of ages for those things that will benefit and strengthen a man's body, so in art it has come to mean a love for those forms that will raise him to a higher plane of thought and feeling.

Eyes have been called the windows of the soul; are they not rather portals to which throng friends and foes seeking to pass that old experienced warder

—our great inheritance of taste? Woe to the citadel when he is feeble or corrupt.

In the whole history of the early world—that is, in such fragments of it as we can decipher—we see no sign that the idea of beauty was separated from the idea of purpose. Even now, in all our modern complications, I think we may assert that any object, natural or artificial, animate or inanimate, simply and well adapted to serve a rightful purpose, can be considered to have some degree of beauty. In all the early periods it seems that slight respect was paid to things that had no meaning and no use.

Life was then less complicated, men's studies and abilities were less specialised, the various arts were not yet distinctly separated from one another nor kept apart from the ordinary affairs of life. In Greek times music and poetry were still wedded, and the drama was their child. Athletic exercises were performed to the cadence of a flute, and in the public contests no prizes were awarded for mere feats of strength, but only when those feats were executed with rhythm and with grace. History was conceived as a long poem, and poetry had no separate existence save as the outward form of some definite message to mankind. Even Solon wrote his laws and his speeches in that form. Sculpture was not yet divorced from painting; pure form was enhanced by skilful colouring, and the painter was not neglectful of pure form. Both were created for various purposes, but among those purposes the mere desire for beauty had little or no share.

May be, if we could trace the whole history of

painting, that branch of art which represents the emotional rather than the intellectual life, we might be able to discover how the divergence of the arts began; but although in the early writings there are many allusions to Greek painters and their celebrated works, not a single example from the golden age of Greece has yet been found. Even the careful excavations of the last few decades have revealed only a few faint traces of their existence. At present we can only study the shadows of the figures painted by those illustrious artists, figures burnt into the memory of more humble craftsmen, and by them transformed and burnt into the surface of their pottery.

By such means, too, we can penetrate still further back into the mists of time, and trace some of the first awakenings of decorative art among the forerunners of the Greeks. We know not who they were; they may have been of kindred race, or perhaps they were descended from an old Ægean stock. Their early efforts are so similar to those of other races that we need not do more than mention the proofs of their existence which have recently been brought to light by the excavations in Bœotia by Professor Tsountas, Dr. Sotiriadhis (Ἐφημερίς ἀρχ., 1908, p. 63), and in Thessaly by Messrs. Droop, Wace, and Thompson (*Liverpool Annals of Archæology*, vol. i. No. 4, 1908).

The three English explorers had started excavating a mound at Zerelia, a place which was thought to be the site of the temple of Athena Itonia, the patron deity and battle-cry of the Thessalians. They ex-

pected to find it rich in relics of the best period of Greek art, but they were sadly disappointed, for no remains of that sort were discovered. However, just below the surface they found about 24 feet of a deposit rich in prehistoric relics, divided up into eight separate layers, the ruins and the refuse of eight successive villages or towns. Their investigations have already yielded many important results, carrying the history of Thessaly back to about 2500 B.C.;⁶⁸ but they have not greatly modified the impressions given by the Cretan and Ægean excavations as to the beginnings of civilisation in the Mediterranean area.

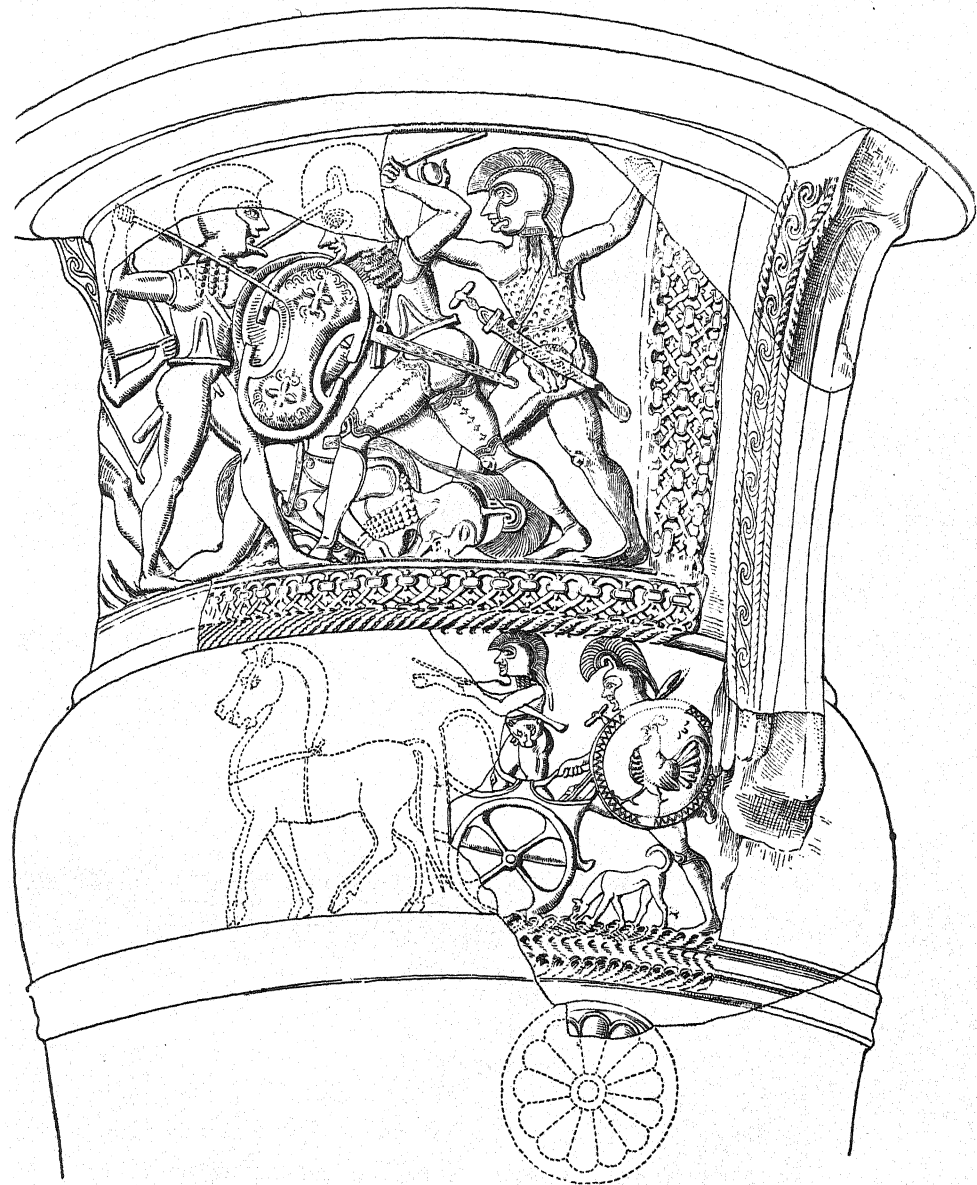
Even in the lowest strata, thin, well-made red-coloured pottery was found in abundance, along with a few vases decorated with elaborate patterns, red on a white, well-polished ground. In the succeeding strata the fine red ware diminishes in quantity, the decorated ware increases; gradually the fine plain red dies out, the decorated degenerates in style; some of the ruined houses, though only built of mud, are finer than the rest, some of the stone weapons are fashioned with more care. Even when the last stratum grew, by slow accretion of the village refuse and by mud houses tumbled down, the common people were still in the neolithic stage, nor had they learned to use the potter's wheel, although apparently a wealthy few imported Mycenaean ware and flaunted rare strange bronze.

It may seem fanciful to try to read between the lines of such unlettered manuscript, but it appears to

me a sad epitome of many a human history. The earliest stage, that of mere barbarism, must have been passed through in some other place, and it is not recorded, for even in the lowest strata we find evidence that the simple population, leading an equal life, were already refined in taste and cultivated art with some success. Now greed and oppression enter in and dominate the careless race, unorganised and uncombined. Like deadly microbes they poison the life blood of the nation, too weak or ignorant to offer much resistance. Then art dies out and luxury corrupts the dominating few. Then comes the end. A new bronze-weaponed race sweeps the effete stone-using tyrants from their village throne, and for three thousand years they rest in their unhonoured grave.

Now once again their walls appear, their cups and vases see the light of day. We read the lesson of the unstoried past. We read, but do we learn?

The invading race was probably the Dorian or the Ionian. Until more excavations have been made, especially on sites occupied continuously during the three ages of stone, of bronze, of iron, the general history of the land cannot be traced. The question is still hotly disputed whether the conquerors brought with them their own style of art or adopted an old style of the conquered which might have been partially submerged by *Ægean* influences. At present the material evidence on each side is so scattered and confused that the contest is like guerilla fighting, in which both sides claim the victory and the outsider



IG. 370.—Colossal amphora found at Sparta in 1905. The figures were formed in moulds and fixed to the jar before it was fired. Another fragment showing the horses was found in 1907. The shape of the shield and the absence of clothing points to its being sixth century work. It is sad that the spirit of greed and domination should have brought such promising work to an untimely end in Sparta, just as the same spirit killed the art of Egypt and Chaldea.

cannot discover what has been really won. As in such warfare he is liable to be maltreated by both the contending parties if he should venture near their battle-fields, let us leave that debatable intermediate period and pass on to the time—about 800 B.C.—when the Dorians were well settled in the Peloponnesus, after their invading hordes had traversed the greater part of Greece, but without causing much disturbance among their Ionian kindred in that outlying district now called Attica.

In Sparta they preserved their coarse and simple character; they even seem to have accentuated it in stern defence of their imagined rights, and in their fierce desire for mastery they crushed within their souls the germs of any higher life. They forsook the field of art; their early culture wasted, its faint results lie trampled under foot. Now only archæologists will care to dig them up; the artist passes by, wondering what might have been if other counsels had prevailed (Fig. 370).

In Attica the hill-top settlement at Athens had less of this exclusiveness; they admitted the inhabitants of other villages to share their privilege of living under the protection of Athena. Thus from that rugged rock a stream of life poured forth to mitigate the evils of the world. The one-man despotisms, useful for little savage tribes, fatal when greater numbers are concerned, beheld a rival scheme of government—the empire of the free—and ever since that time despots have waged a deadly war

against its progress. Despotism leads only to decay. It may shine for a while with a false glory, like that



FIG. 371-a.—Geometric vase found at Thebes. The designs are black on a light glazed ground. Athens. Height thirty-five inches.

of Nero's gilded house in Rome, but it exhausts the life-blood of the nations, and degeneration quickly follows in its train.

Consider all the despots of the world : what have they done for art? Their times were noted for magnificence, the unthinking look upon ostentation as a sure sign of progress, they do not recognise the early symptoms of decay. If but some master hand would write a new "Decline and Fall of Rome,"



FIG. 371-*b*.—Artemis, originally a nature goddess of the lake and stream. Her worship seems to have become ennobled in Greece. She developed into the virgin huntress, patron of animals and children, and sister to the god of music.

comparing its degenerate art with that of other empires of the world during their periods of decline, the popular delusions about the benefits of concentrated wealth and power would have a wholesome shock.

In Athens, then, were sown the seeds of freedom ; the enemy indeed came in and sowed tares amid the wheat, but in spite of that the harvest was the most glorious one the world has ever known. Look at this picture on an Attic vase (Fig. 371). We have



FIG. 372.—Part of a painting worked in tempera on a large alabaster sarcophagus discovered in 1869 at Corneto (the ancient Tarquinii). Large engravings of all the scenes represented were published in the *Monumenti inediti*, 1873. Coloured illustrations of them were given in the *Journal of the Hellenic Society*, 1883. There are so many different tones of colour in the painting that the estimated cost of a lithographic reproduction of this size was nearly £50.

seen the art progress of despotic states: could one imagine that in a few short centuries art could rise in them from such a depth to any height at all? Yet Greece within four hundred years produced Parrhasius, Zeuxis, Tamaris, and Apelles. True, we have now no relics of their work, but some idea may be obtained of how they must have painted by noting what those who had studied in their schools could do. This monochrome reproduction of a painting on an Etruscan sarcophagus (Fig. 372) of an Amazon fighting against a Greek shows how they had solved for their successors many of the problems that confront an artist working with colour on the flat. Glance back along the pages of this book and consider the results obtained by other races apparently as cultivated as the Greeks and far more numerous and wealthy. Is it not plain that they lived in quite a different world, that the expression of their thoughts is in a language foreign to our minds? But here we see that the rubicon is crossed, the ancient barriers are broken down, mankind has entered on new fields, those very fields where we are still at work. Let us go back to the beginning of that momentous struggle and observe the steps that led them to success.

Whether or no the influence of the neolithic potters lasted into the iron age of Greece, the fact is plain that as regards animate forms the Greeks of Athens had everything to learn, and very little to forget, when in the cemetery outside the Dipylon or

double gate they left those great funeral vases painted



FIG. 373-a.—Funeral vase, about four feet in height, found in the Dipylon cemetery. The women have their arms raised above their heads in the attitude of lamentation (see Figs. 122 and 210). The box with long-necked horses on the lid is of the same period. That elongation of the neck and body is often used to give the impression of actual or potential swiftness (see Figs. 336 and 340). (The box is drawn on a different scale.)

with strange pictures of the living and the dead (Fig. 373).

They are the roughest type of childish memory pictures, giving only the salient features of men or animals, and always giving them in their broadest aspects—those that would fix themselves most readily

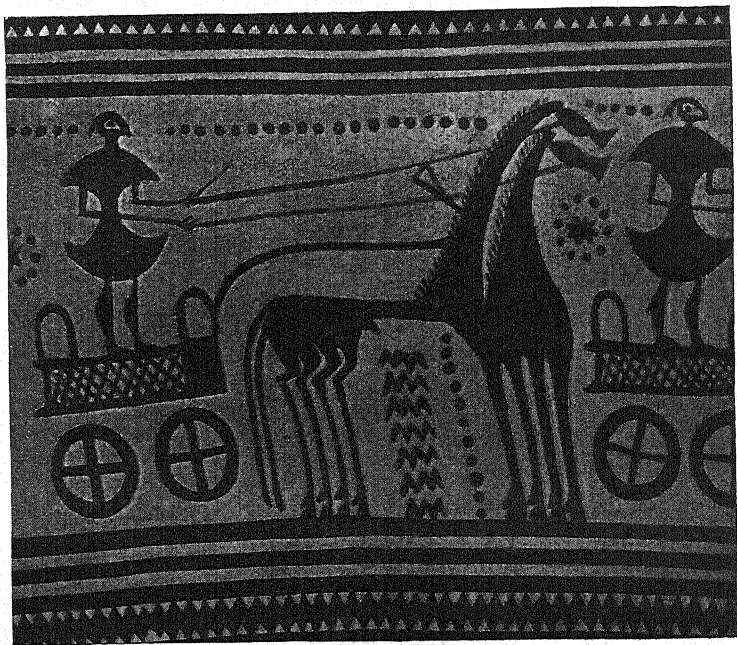


FIG. 373-*b*.—Enlargement of 373. The front of the chariot shown gives the impression of having been intentionally diminished as if in perspective. The drawing of the wheels also seems inspired with the same idea, but it may be fortuitous. They are two-wheeled chariots; there is no reason to believe that any four-wheeled cars were used at that time.

in an inexperienced brain. Faces are drawn in profile, but not the eyes or bodies. Even the corpse upon the bier is turned to show the full width of its chest. A quaint Bœotian shield hangs from each

driver's neck, and artfully conceals the painter's ignorance how to draw the arms. Strangely enough the two-wheeled cars are drawn in rough perspective, and the two wheels are not much out of place.

The whole style shows a strong resemblance to early drawings found in Crete, in Egypt, and in Chaldea, but that is no reason for supposing it to be in any way derived from them. The hill tribes of India, the Polynesians, the Eskimos draw in this style, and Dr. Kerschensteiner has observed that a certain proportion of Bavarian children give triangular bodies to their human figures. Even in modern art schools beginners find an inverted triangle helpful when drawing an outline of the body.⁶⁴

The inability to retain and to reproduce a good mental picture of living forms is not inconsistent with a considerable capacity for designing decorative work composed of purely geometric forms, a capacity which is often conspicuous in savages. According to Dr. Kerschensteiner the faculty for this sort of decorative drawing is, in young children, quite distinct from the faculty for depicting natural objects. Each faculty manifests itself separately at a very early age. Nor do the two sexes seem to possess them in the same proportion, boys having better capacity for seizing general characteristics, and for forming mental pictures of natural objects, while girls take more readily to artificial decorative work. But just as the two sexes are more similar in early youth than when fully developed, so in its youth Greek art took readily to

geometric decorative work, and its delineation of natural forms was very poor.

Most of the pottery found in that cemetery out-



FIG. 374.—Large Dipylon vase, three feet high, found at Athens. Black, purely geometric decoration. Variations of the meander (or key) pattern and a simple lozenge or cheque pattern are the usual designs on this ware.

side the Double Gate of Athens is purely geometric (Fig. 374); it was only by degrees that birds, animals, and human figures began to find a place on it (Fig.

375). Owing to its profusion there, and to its definite characteristics, the name Dipylon was given to all pottery of this style wherever it was found, but now it is confined to Attic work and the word "geometric" is used as a generic term for this style. It is a much less distinctive name since other varieties of geometric



FIG. 375.—Geometric bowl showing the introduction of designs from living subjects. A similar bird frieze is seen in Fig. 371. Height four inches. Ashmolean Museum

ware are found in many other countries and in many different periods.

Another feature of this Dipylon style is that it is almost entirely rectilinear, curved lines being seldom introduced except in the form of simple circles mechanically drawn with a compass. The designs are much more elaborate than those of other early periods, such as the early Minoan or the neolithic Egyptian. They are not mere skeuomorphs, nor are they solitary patches of ornament; they are complete schemes

covering the whole surface. They seem to have been derived from patterns embroidered on textile fabrics, or incised on metal work, in both of which rectilinear forms are more easily reproduced than curvilinear.

A rather similar style of decoration is found all over the Danubian region on pottery and bronze work



FIG. 376.—Large bowl, known as the "Burgon Vase," found at Athens, now in the British Museum. The rendering of the heads in outline while the bodies are mere black silhouettes was apparently derived from Ionian and Rhodian examples. The barbed tails are curious. About one foot in height.

of much older date than the Dorian migration, but that does not help to settle the question whether the origin of the Dipylon style is to be ascribed to Europe or to the East. The motives of those designs may have been taken from fabrics made at home or from Eastern rugs and bronzes which were probably well known in Europe in very ancient times, brought there

either as merchandise or as booty. European hordes made frequent raids into Asia, and some of them may have returned home, although most of them, if not exterminated, abandoned their nomad life, and formed settlements such as those of Galatia, to which in much later times some wandering Gauls gave its exotic name.

From the designs on these Eastern woven fabrics and embroideries were probably obtained the strange figures of lions and other animals almost extinct in Europe, but reproduced upon the pottery and metal work with curious transformations (Fig. 376), showing that probably the craftsmen had never seen the original animals. These migrations of patterns, due to war or commerce, make the study of origins very difficult and complicated, especially as the movements were often reciprocal, each nation learning something from the other. From the relics in the tombs, or in the sites of ancient settlements, we often get clear indications of these currents, and of their diversion or cessation. Thus among the votive offerings in the Spartan temple of Artemis Orthia, there are many pieces of amber showing the existence of a trade route to the Baltic. But after 700 B.C. the amber ceases, the connection with the north seems to be broken, Sparta, as well as the rest of Greece, turns its attention to the East. Eastern motives, which previously were rare and rather doubtful, now begin to dominate both style and subject in the painting on the vases.

During this Orientalising period, which lasted for more than a hundred years, the history of art is strangely complicated. Perhaps some day there may be discoveries in Asia Minor as wonderful, though not as unexpected, as those in the palæolithic caves of France and Spain. Then we shall really know something about the phases of this curious change. Now we can only see the faint reflection of them on the pottery of the various states.



In Ionia the crude stage of the Dipylon is altogether absent or unrecorded. The Ionian Greeks seem from the first to have been strongly influenced by the refined experienced art of Egypt and the East. Perhaps to them is due the credit of having transmitted it to Greece, but they do not seem to have had sufficient psychic energy to digest it, so as to strengthen their own growth, and thus develop new and living forms of art for the enrichment of mankind.

So many currents met amidst the islands and along the shores of this new focus of the world that we are bewildered by the eddies that form and swirl and disappear in various local centres. Sometimes a survival of Mycenaean or Minoan art seems welling up from unsuspected depths. Spirals and other curvilinear forms mingle with the lotus flower of Egypt or with rosettes and palmettes of the East (Fig. 377). Lions and griffins, sphinxes and other monsters march

FIG. 377.—One of the numerous varieties of the palmette pattern. For the origin and development of these designs see Riegl's *Stilfragen* (1893).

in procession round the jugs and vases (Fig. 378), but the human element is wanting.

It is possible that in Ionia luxury and its usual concomitant, oppression, had destroyed all interest and belief in the real dignity of man. His joys, his



FIG. 378.—Small oinochoe (wine jug), six inches high, found at Corinth. The Corinthian ware was of reddish clay covered with a yellowish white slip. The designs are black relieved with purple and occasionally white. From Collignon's *Catalogue des Vases d'Athènes*.

sorrows, and his daily life are unrecorded, and artists seem to live in a phantasmal world of strange and brilliant animals armed with sharp teeth and claws. Redundancy and richness are the keynotes of their work; their figures have no real life or purpose,

and every vacant spot is filled with useless ornament (Fig. 379). Fearful, apparently, lest it should be said, "What is the meaning of this tangled life?"



FIG 379.—Corinthian vase, supposed to have been dug up at Cervetri. In this vase the potter imitated the ring handles of a metal vessel, but he did not make them moveable. The arrangement of the decoration in zones followed the system natural to vases built up of strips of metal. Fourteen inches high. Louvre Museum.

they leave no space where the beholder's eye may rest, but with bright colours and unnatural forms they seek to dazzle and distract attention from all the

unreality of wealth and the bitter emptiness they see around, but do not dare to represent.

Cyprus and Rhodes, Samos and Clazomenæ vied with each other in this laborious art. Corinth and Athens followed in their steps, and revelled for a time in the strange richness. Like all young nations when they were in the patriarchal stage they had submitted to the rule of kings, hereditary or self-elected—the only means of fostering discipline if men are ignorant or widely separated. Under the aristocrats and wealthy tyrants who succeeded to the kings, the Oriental style was welcome and appropriate. Nor can we say that it was all in vain. It served to train men's eyes and hands, thus fitting them for better things when they were strong enough to walk alone.

Then came the time of trial. Was their development to be arrested at this stage, or could they burst their bonds, pursuing nobler aims? Spokesmen were wanted who could express their comrades' thoughts and take the lead in various ways. Conceit makes certain men assert that they alone are qualified to rule, and they object to change. Even good tyrants find it hard to realise that they are no longer necessary. They claim to be the saviours of the commonwealth, and weaker men fall grovelling at their feet. They cannot see that as the state grows larger and more highly organised, no single individual can hold the complicated reins. Signs of such times are manifest both in the history and in the art of Greece. Tyrants were slain or banished; men had to bestir their brains,

and think and say whether they disapproved. Of advisers there were plenty ; parasites put forth their mercenary strength, and myrmidons assisted with brute force. No man is fit to live who likes to be a slave ; no man can live along with other men and still be absolutely free. But what proportion of his liberty he should surrender is always a matter for dispute. Government, as well as art, is a long series of experiments. Greece now began to make them for herself. Athens was more successful than any other state in finding the right mean. Her citizens enjoyed a large amount of liberty ; her artists were free from royal and from priestly supervision ; but they all learned to recognise the value of a certain measure of restraint.

Ionia had made an early and a brilliant start, but there was a certain femininity about her growth—a love of refinement, of artificiality and of submission. There was also a lack of initiative that makes it hard to say what might have happened if she had not succumbed to Persia. It almost seems as if her art would have become stagnant and conventional, like that of Egypt or of Assyria. Possibly it was as well that she did fall, leaving the rest of Greece more independent, isolated, uncontaminated, free.

The mainland indeed enjoyed a strange conjunction of conditions most favourable for art—a bright climate, a good position for defence, moderate and not too concentrated wealth. The population was composed of elements not too divergent to be capable of fusion, their religion was fairly free from that

mixture of mysticism with mercenary aims from which springs priestcraft, their art and literature were free from any dominating foreign influence, their political life was not checked internally nor stunted by the dread of any overpowering danger from outside. Above all, they had a noble self-reliance, and could accept responsibility; willing to work and learn, willing to fight and die, yet loth to bow before a



FIG. 380.—The earliest known representation of Hercules attacking Geryon and his dog. It is inserted in the middle of a frieze of lions painted round a small pyxis (box) of light coloured clay. Found near Athens.

self-appointed lord, or copy slavishly the art of other men.

This love of independence, with yet a certain readiness to co-operate and to combine, was a new feature in the history of mankind—that is to say, among the races that had emerged from barbarism. Civilisation too often leads a select few to sloth, and sloth dearly loves a lord—some one to save it trouble, to stereotype its policy, its art, or its religion, so that it need not think. Greece was no home for sloth; it had outgrown its lords, its Eastern art, its mystic

mummings, though in their Orphic form they lingered on another century. Once more the daily life of man seems interesting to men, the weird forms of monstrous

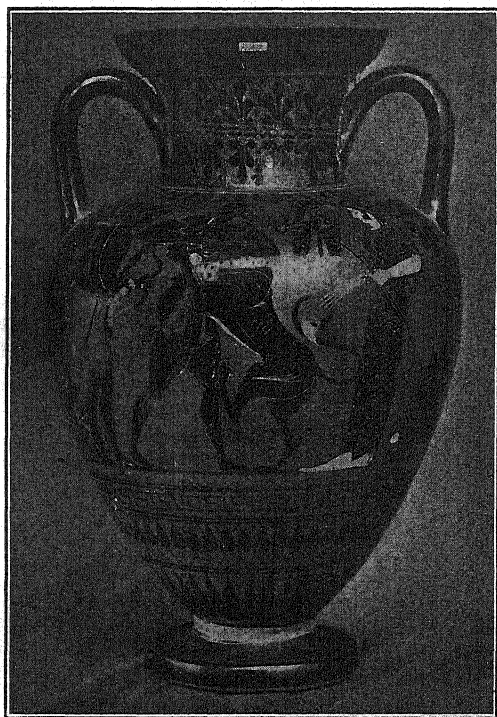


FIG. 381.—Amphora found at Vulci (Etruria), now in the British Museum, B. 232. Height nearly seventeen inches.

animals vanish from the vases, and human figures take the place of honour.

The change seems rather sudden, but there are previous signs of discontent with Orientalising art. Even in the middle of the seventh century—during

the rule of the Cypselid tyrants—we find a drawing on a Corinthian pyxis of Hercules attacking the monster Geryon (Fig. 380). It is a crude sketch on an insignificant little box, but it is interesting as being the earliest representation of the myth. Whatever

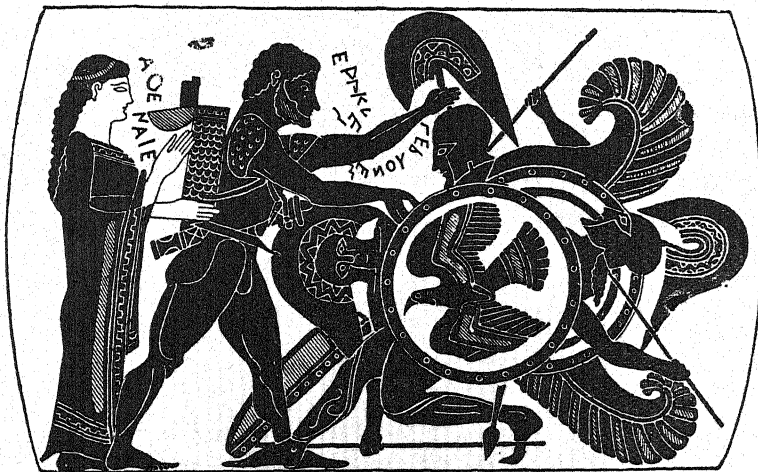


FIG. 382.—Figures painted with black varnish on a red panel of an Amphora found at Cervetri (the old Etruscan town, Caere). The few purple strokes are shaded in this drawing. One of Geryon's heads is full-face, perhaps to indicate that it was injured and in pain. The plume of a helmet presented a difficulty which the early painters solved by depicting it as hanging down on both sides of the head (see Fig. 394). Geryon's wings are of the same up-curling type as the wings of the Egyptian monster (Fig. 133). His name is written from right to left as in Asiatic writing, while ΕΡΑΚΛΗΣ is left to right, both systems being rather indiscriminately used at that period. British Museum, B. 155.

may be the origin of the legend about Hercules, there can be little doubt that its popularity among the common people was due to the desire for a deliverer, some one who was strong enough to free them from ravening lions (Fig. 381) or triple-headed owners of

vast herds of cattle (Fig. 382), who would cleanse the Augean stable of corruption and foul wrongs, who could ease the labours of men oppressed by the burden of the world (Fig. 383). He does not wield

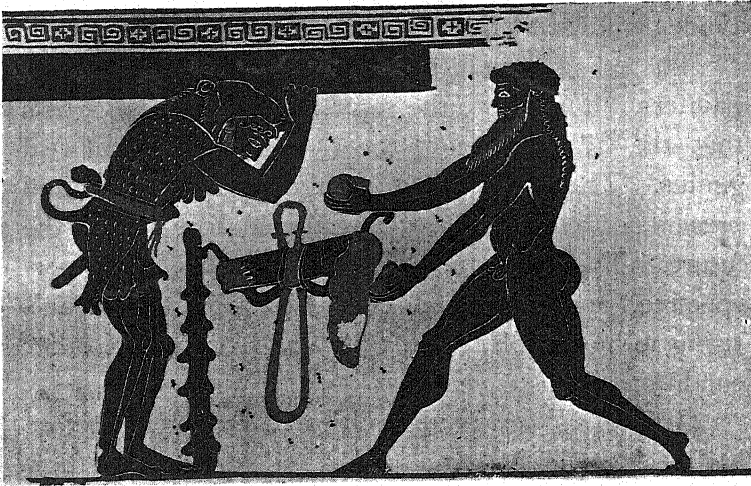


FIG. 383.—Hercules supporting the sky (represented by six stars and a crescent moon) whilst Atlas went to get the golden apples of the Hesperides. His club, bow and quiver are not lying on the ground, but stand up without any visible means of support, a detail which did not trouble the early Greeks. The figures are about four inches high and are painted with black varnish on a white slip on a lekythos found in Eretria. On these lekythoi or funeral vases, owing to the conservatism of religious customs, black figure silhouettes were painted long after red figure drawing was well developed. This vase is fifth century work and the drawing is much less stiff than in the ordinary black figure period, which ended about 500 B.C.

a kingly sword nor bear a lordly spear. His victories are achieved with the common archer's bow and arrow or with the poor peasant's club.⁶⁵

Thus art unconsciously entered upon a new phase, and began to express the aspirations of the people

for better conditions in this present world. Stories of the pains or pleasures of a future life, invented by the victims or by the parasites of tyranny, never seem to have had much attraction for the Indo-European people, although indeed most of our conceptions of Hades had their origin in Greece.

There had been little idealism among the Egyptian painters. They bore the same relation to real artists that the old chroniclers bear to historians of real genius. They depicted a bald record of the past and present, or a biassed and ill-founded forecast of the future. They had no sense of proportion or perspective, and no vision of the possibility of man's rising to higher planes in this world or in any other condition of existence.

Greece had many difficulties to overcome before her ideals could be even partly realised, but the new spirit quickened her artistic life, and enabled her to achieve in a few centuries what other nations had failed to accomplish in untold millenniums. The doings of mankind, of heroes and of gods, sublime in human form, furnish the subjects for the artist's brush, and eagerly he strives to render the presentment worthy of the glorious ideal imagined as the real. Animals and conventional schemes are relegated to a subordinate place in his compositions (Fig. 384), and he soon learns to concentrate attention by simplicity instead of distracting it by over-crowded ornament.

I may perhaps be accused of unduly personifying Greece, and it may be said that it was only a con-

geries of little warring states developing each in a different way and at a different pace. This is a view one is much inclined to take when studying in detail

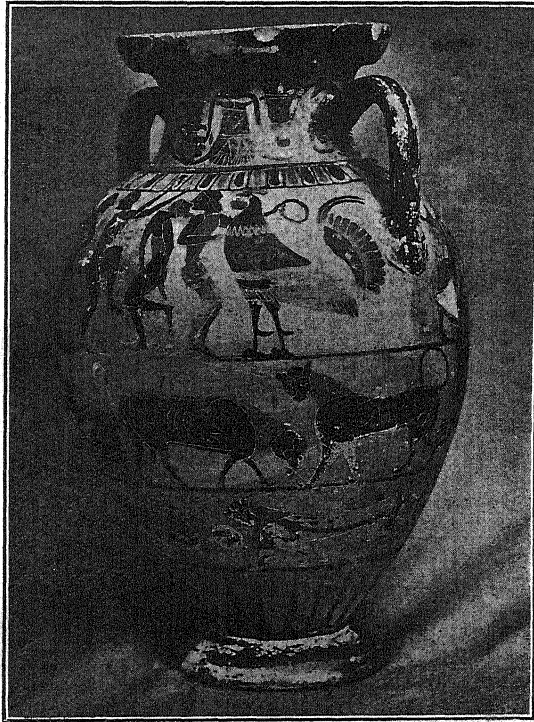


FIG. 384.—Early sixth century amphora showing Oriental influence by its lotus pattern round the neck, and by the arrangement of animals in zones, but they are relegated to a subordinate position now and human beings occupy the place of honour. On the other side of the vase is a very interesting representation of the sacrifice of Polyxena. British Museum. Height about fifteen inches.

the conflicting elements which arrange and re-arrange themselves in so many puzzling combinations. Doric and Attic art, Spartan and Athenian politics seem too

distinct to be regarded as emanations of a single personality ; but if we take a wider view and compare the general result with that which was achieved in other lands, we are well justified in speaking of that result as the product of a single entity—of Greece (Prof. Percy Gardner, *Principles of Greek Art*, p. 210).

It would be impossible to give in this short sketch the details of the progress of the various states. Broadly speaking, we may say that after the Orientalising period painters devoted their attention to perfecting their drawing of the human figure as a silhouette, a mere black form, relieved with lines of white painted upon it,⁶⁶ or by red lines produced by incisions made with a pointed instrument (Fig. 385). Purple and various other colours were sometimes introduced, especially by the Ionians, still the ware well deserves the name "Black figured," which is applied to the whole class of vases decorated with these silhouette-like forms. The neck, foot, and handles of the vessel were generally covered with a black varnish, leaving a square, oblong, or circular reddish-coloured field whereon to draw the picture. In later times this red field was extended all round the body of the vase.

On the mainland of Greece, the faces and bare limbs of women were generally painted white, and their eyes were drawn almond-shaped, while the men were black all over, and their eyes were circular with a small stroke at each side (Fig. 386). This convention was not observed by the Ionians, in whose

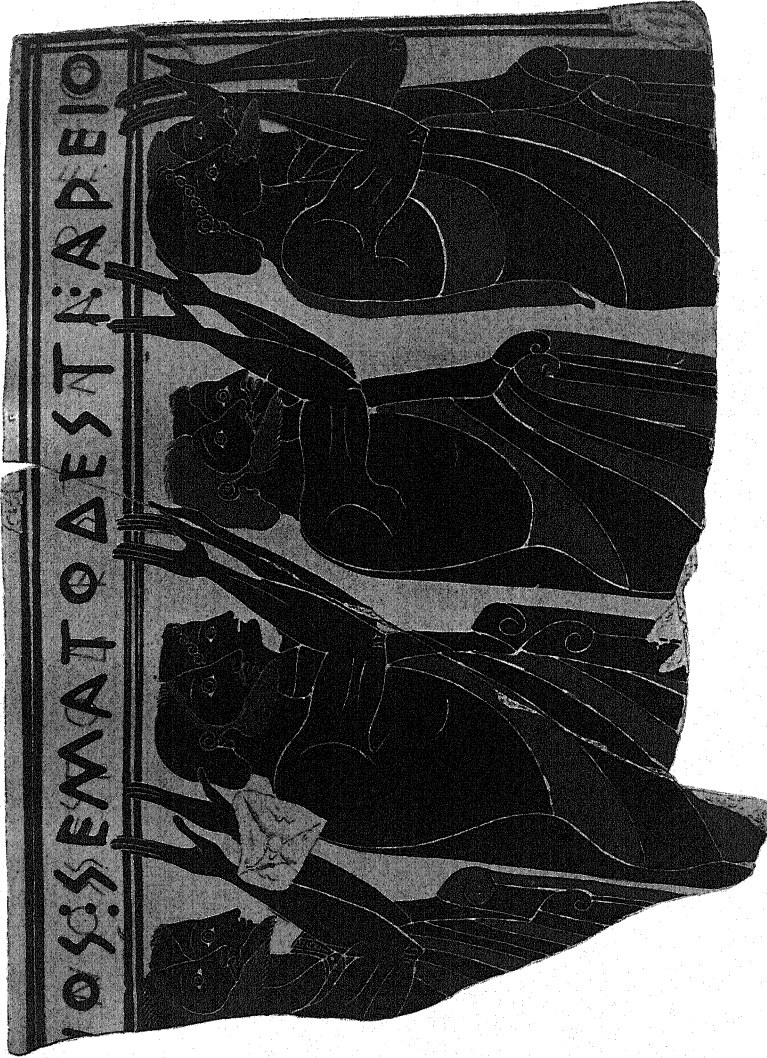


FIG. 385.—Fragment of B.F. pottery dug up when a road was being excavated at Athens. It represents a funeral procession. The exaggerated length of the fingers (with the thumbs on the wrong side of the hands) recalls the Egyptian style (e.g. FIG. 200). The hand of one of the men in front is in an unnatural position owing to the painter not having left sufficient space for it when planning his drawing. Early artists of all races were very reluctant to hide any part of the faces of their figures. About half actual size.

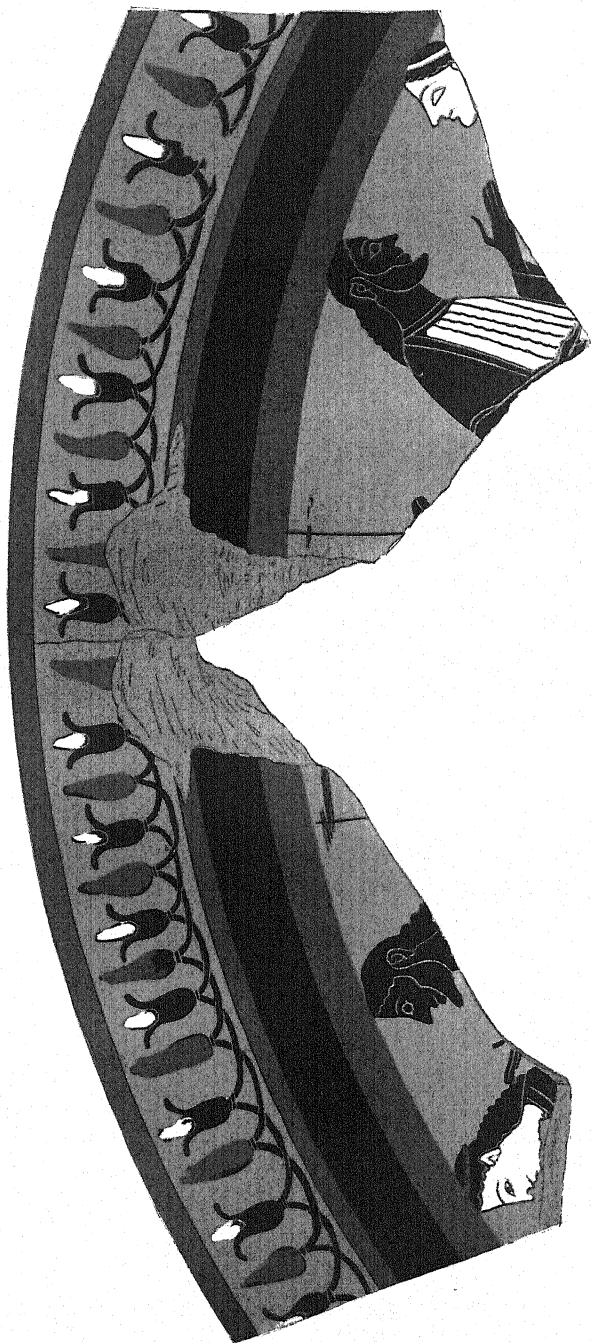
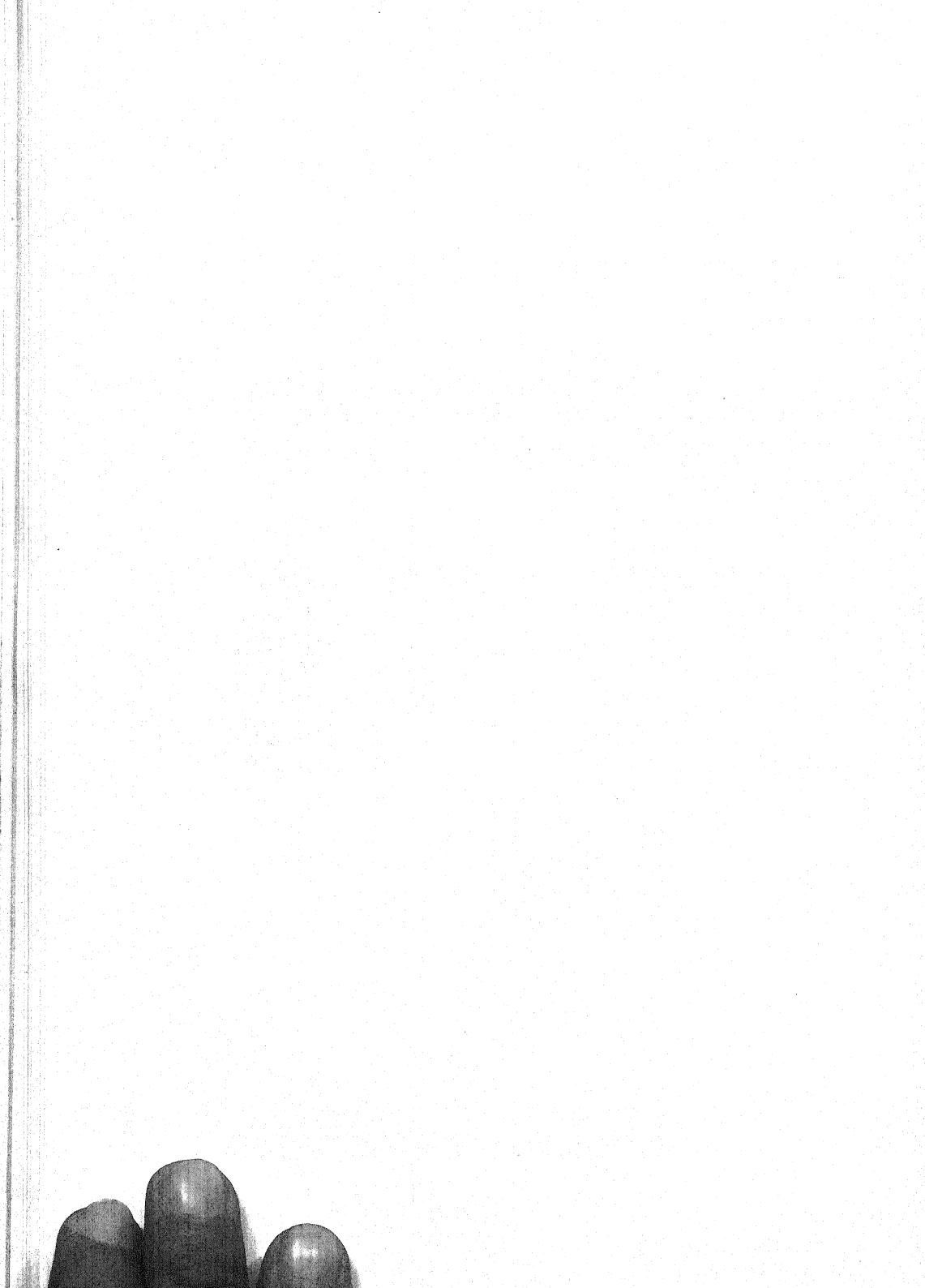


FIG. 386.—Fragment of B.F. Vase found at Eleusis. The border consists of stylised lotus flowers and buds,
a favourite design in Egypt.



work the men also have pale faces and almond eyes. The colour adopted for men's faces by the mainland Greeks may be accounted for by their having led much less luxurious lives, but it is hard to account for the strange shape given to their eyes. It may have

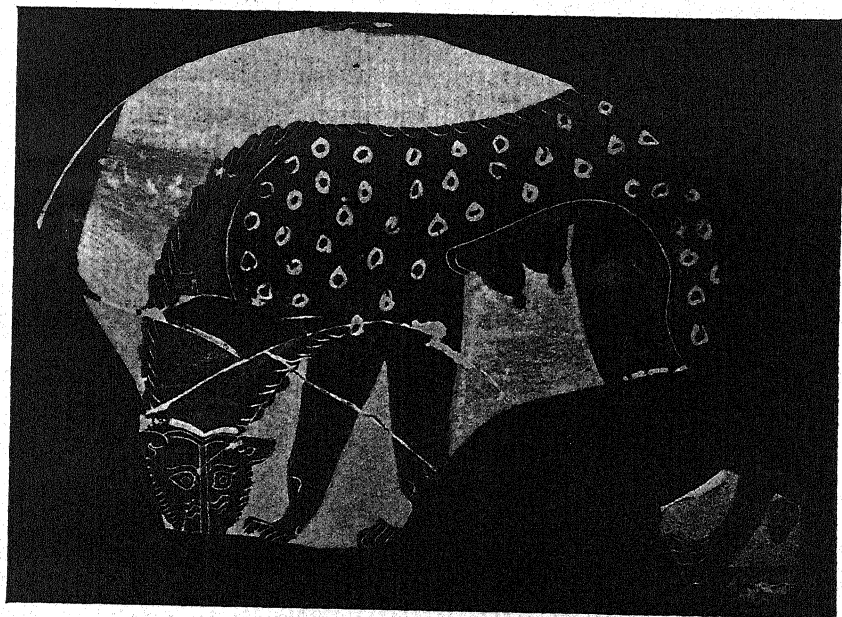


FIG. 387.—Fragment of an Ionian vase found in the old Greek colony of Olbia, on the Black Sea, at the mouth of the Dnieper.

been in imitation of the round eyes of bulls and lions, thus giving the impression of force in the male faces, or possibly, as Professor E. A. Gardner has suggested to me, it may have been a mere question of technique. The eyes on a black body could be made round without difficulty, as they were incised with a sharp-pointed

tool. Those on a light-coloured surface were drawn with a brush, and could therefore be more easily made almond-shaped. It is not an important question, but it shows how cautious one ought to be in assigning ulterior motives as the reason for conventions that may be only due to some detail of technical convenience.

The black-figured style lasted from about 600 B.C. to 500 B.C., and lingered on much longer in ware used for religious observances. This is in accordance with the usual conservatism of religions, which always cling to archaic ways and customs. The silhouette figures did not lend themselves to any great improvements either in form or colour, and towards the end of the period the workmanship was often hurried and careless, because of the great demand by rich Etrurians for Greek vases to be placed within their tombs. So many of these vases were obtained from Etruscan graves in the early part of the nineteenth century, and so few had then been found in Greece, that archæologists at first thought that they had been manufactured in Etruria, and even now they are still called Etruscan by many people who might be expected to know better.

Art never flourished under the rich Etrurian lords. For their own use they preferred the coarse barbaric splendour of expensive bronze work in relief to the more refined delineations by Attic artists on cheap earthenware. Those wealthy patrons of art buried the better work of Greece, and treasured

in their homes the inferior productions of the poor craftsmen of Etruria. It is symbolic of what has happened in so many other lands. When an energetic nation's wealth is unevenly allotted the struggle to obtain a larger share fosters ostentation or pretence and destroys the leisure of the great majority. Those who have got the gold become the rulers of men's destinies. They stimulate art as a costly curiosity, not as an expression of real feeling. They hide its products from the common gaze and bury it within their homes as effectively as the Etruscans buried it within their tombs. The things they really use are not artistic, but merely luxurious and costly. Then the avenger comes. Their wealth and stunted art melts in that fiery trial. The mere material passes into other hands. The stunted growth is killed, but the true soul of art will issue from its tomb and take new forms of life in better times.

CHAPTER XVII

THE TRIUMPH OF GREEK ART

WE have noticed that the sixth century—the period of the black-figured vases—was a time of emancipation and expansion. The discoveries, inventions, and economic changes of previous centuries had gradually produced their natural effect in various lands, causing slow upheavals and submergencies as beneficial, or as disastrous as those that follow the sudden shocks of war. Forces of a different kind had become controlled by rulers of a different type, and until they in their turn could be controlled there was but little scope for art. In devising such control the Greeks had partially succeeded. The brilliant cruelty of warrior kings, the sordid cruelty of mean commercial lords, had been restrained; the Seven Sages had not lived in vain, and for a while the nobler part of man had opportunities of growth.

In sculpture we have good evidence of the rapid progress made under the new conditions. As regards painting, we have to glean what evidence we can from writers who lived hundreds of years later, and took their ideas about the early painters from authors whose works have disappeared. In most cases too they had not seen the pictures that they mention, but we can

gather the meaning of some of their ambiguous phrases by referring to the paintings on the vases. Pliny in his *Natural History* (Jex-Blake and Sellers, p. 101), says that Eumarus of Athens (who is supposed to have lived in the early part of the sixth century) was the first to distinguish male from female figures, and he also "introduced all kinds of new subjects." We may take this to mean that Eumarus set the example, afterwards followed by the potters, of giving a lighter tint to the faces and bare limbs of women. The "new subjects" were probably the mythological scenes which replaced the animal figures of the previous period.

The next painter mentioned by Pliny is Kimon of Kleonæ, who lived in the latter part of the century. Pliny credits him with having invented "*obliquas imagines*," an expression which has given rise to much discussion. Some writers think it refers to poses other than full face or profile (Gardner, *Principles of Greek Art*, p. 101), others maintain that it refers to foreshortening (Walters, *History of Ancient Pottery*, vol. i. p. 397). If the former interpretation is true, it would show that vase painters were less advanced than those who, like Kimon, worked on a larger scale as fresco or terra-cotta painters, for no instances of three-quarter face drawing are found on vases until fifty or sixty years later (Fig. 396).

It is indeed highly probable that towards the end of the sixth century the mural painters did make more

rapid progress, and branched off from merely decorative work to that higher form of art for which Professor Percy Gardner has proposed the convenient term "substantive." Decorative art is subordinate to the general effect of the object decorated, and would necessarily be less subject to change in the direction of naturalism, since accuracy of representation is not wanted for decorative work unless it is also narrative. The geometric and the Orientalising styles were purely decorative. During their predominance there was no temptation to make naturalistic experiments. When the potters began to depict mythological scenes and tried "to tell a story" on a vase, they would not at first be disposed to admit any new treatment that might interfere with the general effect. After a time they and their patrons would feel that it was rather incongruous to represent white men by black silhouettes. This feeling would gather strength when any innovating mural painter had succeeded in giving a more natural appearance to his figures, either by the use of new colours or by more accurate delineation. The vase painter might then think of trying a new system of drawing, but as regards colour he would be confronted with another difficulty. Even if he decided that these colours would not spoil the general effect, how could he be sure that they would not change during the process of firing? Thus vase painting would naturally lag behind fresco painting, but we cannot tell how long it

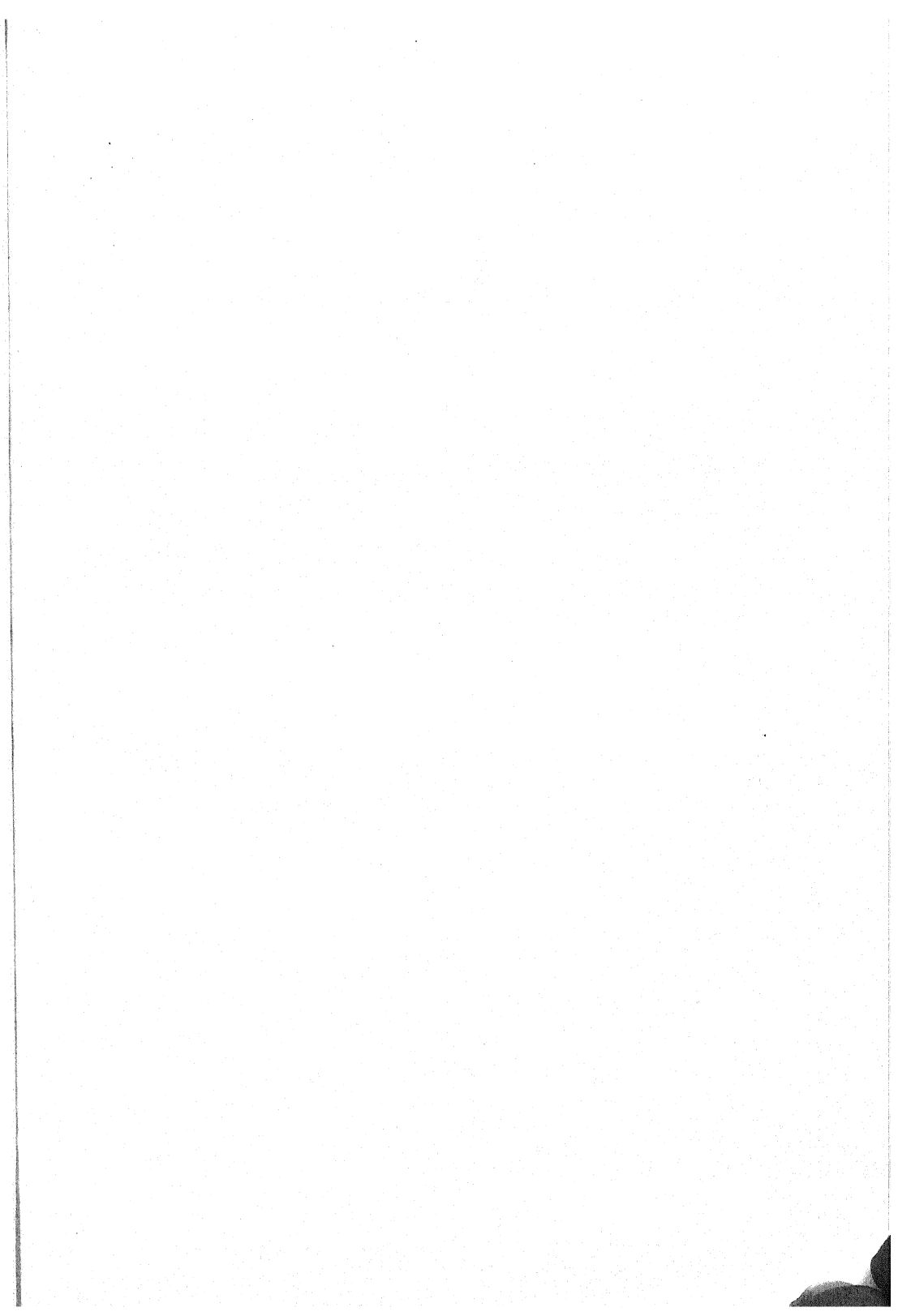




PLATE XV.

FIG. 388.—One of the terra-cotta panels which filled the metopes of the recently discovered Temple of Apollo at Thermon, the capital of the Aetolian League. The temple dates from the seventh century and its columns were originally of wood, therefore sculpture would not have been appropriate. As these panels had to be fired we cannot expect the same freedom of colouring that might be found in frescoes, but they probably represent the general style of painting at that period; merely narrative or decorative and without any attempt at toning to bring the figures into relief. The height of the man is about twenty-three inches.

lagged behind and remained unaffected by the progress made in other branches. Therefore until archæologists can discover a series of early frescoes, we cannot feel at all sure when the Greeks made the "inventions" recorded by Pliny.

We get some indication of the character of the mural painters' drawing and colour schemes from the terra-cotta metopes recently discovered at Thermion in Ætolia (Fig. 388). They date from the early part of the sixth century, and do not show any very different style of treatment from that on the vases of the same date. Only three colours were employed—white, black, and three shades of red, but this limitation may have been due to technical difficulties, for they had to be subjected to nearly as great a heat as the vases.

It is very unfortunate that we have no indication whatever of the origin or cause of the most important of all the changes made by the vase painters—the change from silhouette figures to pure outline drawing. It took place during the last quarter of the sixth century, and began by a complete reversal of the old system. The whole of the vase was now painted black except just the figures, which were left the natural colour of the clay—that is, red. It is difficult to account for this sudden change of fashion; possibly it was due to the example of artists like Kimon of Kleonæ, who worked at other branches of painting. Whatever was the reason, the new style soon became so popular that, after a short

time, the black-figured ware ceased to be made except for a few special purposes.

At first sight the change does not seem so very great, nor likely to lead to far-reaching results. It seems to be only a change from black silhouettes on a red ground to red silhouettes on a black ground (Fig. 389). The real difference is seen when we come to note the character of the lines showing the inner details of the figures. On the black-figured vases the white lines were painted and the red lines were incised; they were harsh and stiff and not susceptible of any gradation of tone. But for the red-figured vases the inner markings were made with a black pigment, which could be diluted so as to give finer lines, and also any desired variety of tone. In this way the vase painter obtained a result which M. Ed. Pottier calls an unobtrusive polychrome. The designs are, however, essentially linear drawings, and soon begin to be distinguished by their freedom and beauty. Wonderfully fine brushes were used, sometimes consisting only of a single bristle. By a careful and minute study of many different specimens, the whole process has been reconstituted. Some of the figures were first sketched on the red surface of the vase with a blunt-pointed instrument. Then the contours of all the figures that were to compose the picture were drawn with a brush making a line about one-eighth of an inch wide. This stage is shown on a fragment of a vase which, for some reason or another, never had the rest of the back-

FIG. 390.



FIG. 389.

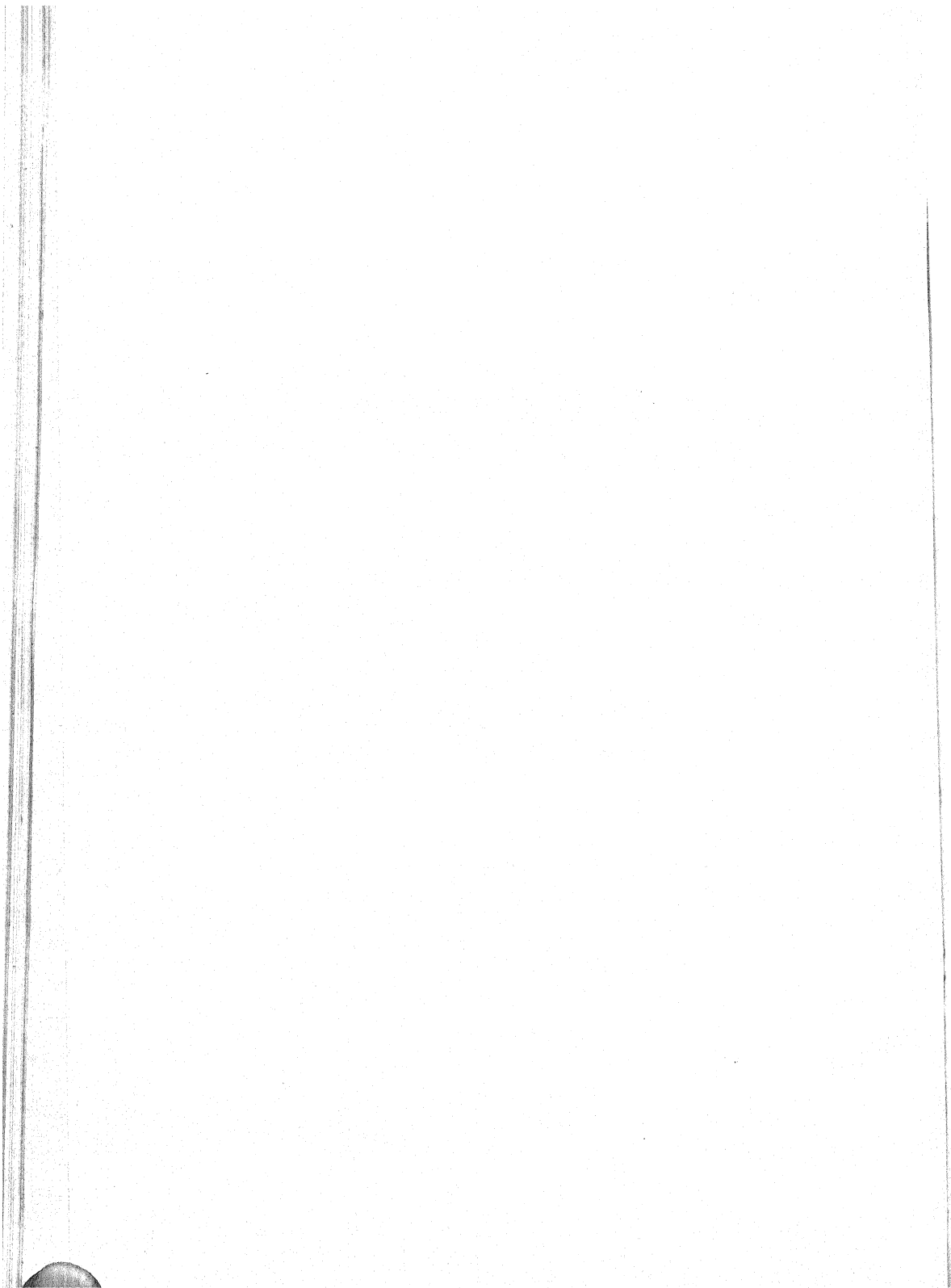


PLATE XVI.

FIG. 390.—Fragment, now in the Musée céramique de Sèvres, showing how the figures were executed in the earlier period. The black band was drawn round the outline previously sketched on the soft clay with a dull point. The rest of the background was probably filled in by an assistant.

FIG. 389.—Achilles slaying Troilos, the son of Priam, a favourite subject of the Greek potters. They often toned down its savageness by representing Troilos as grown up. It was painted on the interior of a kylix (a shallow drinking cup) by Euphronius (500—470 B.C.). The face of Troilos below the forehead is a "restoration," and probably incorrect, since the early Greeks generally drew older faces in their few representations of children. The "restored" kylix is now in the Museum at Perugia; its original state is shown in Hartwig's "Meisterschalen," Plate 59.

To face p. 480.



ground filled in—a filling that was probably left to be done by some assistant (Fig. 390).

It used to be supposed that the fine lines were drawn with one continuous stroke, but this would not really be possible, since a single bristle would not hold enough of the pigment. By means of a magnifying glass the joinings can often be seen where the line was broken when the brush was removed to take up a fresh supply of paint. It was also commonly believed that it was impossible for the vase painters to make any correction of their strokes, and that the faultless execution was due to their almost super-human skill. M. Pottier, however, thinks this to be an error, and he says that the result is due to their capacity for taking pains (*Douris*, p. 36).⁶⁷ It is probably also due to the keen criticism and appreciation of their fellow-workers and their patrons. Although the potters did a large export trade, their chief regular patrons were the ordinary freemen composing the Greek nation, excluding, of course, the slave population, whose tastes have to be left out of the account. Little more regard was paid to them than we pay to our beasts of burden or to our machines; they were merely kept in good working condition. What effect a large increase in their numbers may have had in accelerating the downfall of art in Greece is another question which must be left to the students of degeneration.

The rapid progress of the Greeks in art is sometimes explained by saying that they were an artistic

race ; but there is no reason to suppose that all of them, or even a large proportion of them, could actually do any artistic work. The reason why art received such a stimulus in the sixth and fifth centuries was because there was a widespread appreciation of it, and a constant steady demand for its products for definite purposes. It was not dependent on the fickle favour of a small cultured circle of people, cherishing it not as a necessary and natural part of their daily life, but merely as one of their many luxuries.

The Americans are considered an inventive race, and that is so, not because the ordinary man makes inventions, but because he appreciates and requires new mechanical appliances for his own use, thus stimulating the inventive faculties of the few who are sufficiently gifted to be able to satisfy him. Both manifestations are the natural result of definite causes acting in a congenial environment. The belief that rulers can have much effect in stimulating art has as little foundation as a belief that the Sultan of Morocco could stimulate his people to make inventions.

Nor was Greek progress due to superabundant riches. Greece had few sources of wealth, and those few have not yet been well investigated. Historians used to attach little importance to the study of economic conditions. Sources of wealth were generally sought for in successful wars, regardless of the fact that war generally impoverishes both combatants, and is only of advantage to the victor if it allows him to pursue his

way in peace. Greece was really a poor country, and it remained poor until the great expansion of its trade after the Persian wars brought wealth and luxury to a small proportion of its citizens. The Homeric poems have indeed led us to believe in the splendour of the ancient palaces of Greece. They abound with those high-sounding terms in which the poets of all times have vaunted the magnificence of their royal masters. But here and there some casual phrase reveals the bare facts beneath the flowery robe of poetry, and we see that their daily life was even rougher than that of the mediæval knights and barons crowded together in their smoke-grimed halls.

There was not much more luxury even in the seventh century, it was only towards the end of it that the first stone temple was built in Greece. The palaces of the old kings, archons, or other chief men were probably rough specimens of architecture, and not to be compared with the spacious and refined buildings erected fifteen hundred years before in Crete. Thus at the end of the sixth century, when the statuary and the red-figured vases show that, owing to the patient labours of many unknown humble men, Greece was beginning to bring forth results far surpassing those that any previous civilisation had attained, we have this condition of affairs—no great rulers, no great priesthood, no great wealth. Under such conditions, is it possible that any art should live and thrive? The answer is written large enough that all who will may see.

The Greeks had long been freed from their leading strings, they had been schooled by many teachers, they had developed power by healthy exercise, they had increased its value by sturdy self-restraint, and now their mental and material growth was coming towards its prime. Then a gigantic foe appeared, threatening to crush them by mere weight, Darius, King of Persia, representing the powers that have for ages received the worship of mankind—the kingly, the priestly, and the money power. And yet he and his successors fell before the infant power of freedom, a power that even now is little understood, and seldom well directed.

After the struggle, and the victory, the Greeks acquired fresh confidence in themselves and in their own ideals; that feeling is now reflected in their painting and their statuary. The old conventions disappear and new ones take their place, more reasonable and more expressive. Unmerited abuse is sometimes heaped upon conventions, but they are inseparable from art; without them naturalism would degenerate into mere realism. Wax figures and stuffed animals would dethrone sculpture, drawing and painting would yield the palm to coloured photographs. On the other hand, convention without the controlling influence of naturalism leads to mere symbolism, and, when allowed full sway, develops or degenerates, as it did in Egypt into mere picture writing—hieroglyphics, the fine art of the priests. It is hard for artists to hold the balance between the claims of these two attendant genii.

It is possible, though it does not seem probable, that written language, which has developed from crude hieroglyphics, may in the distant future entirely supplant the plastic and pictorial art as a means of expressing perception or emotion. Word painting may become one of the fine arts. It would be consistent with the general struggle of mankind against material or mechanical limitations, against rules and conventions—a struggle which in literature has its outcome in the prose poem and the gradually decreasing popularity of the old poetic forms.

As regards the balance between naturalism and convention, the Greek sculptors set a fine example to the world; how sad it is that we cannot also see how their great painters solved the problem! We read warm praises of the works of Polygnotus, of Micon, of Panænos, but we have not found a single one, although from the descriptions of them given by Pausanias the traveller, we know that many of them were still in fair condition on the walls of various public buildings in the second century after Christ. It is a strange reversal of the fate that has befallen the older painters—those of Egypt and of Crete. Their names have perished, though their productions have lasted longer than the better work of Greece.

According to Pliny it was Polygnotus who first gave expression to his faces and permitted the draperies to reveal the forms that hitherto they had concealed. He is also said to have introduced perspective, but it was of a simple and childish sort, if we

may judge by the transcripts of it that have come down to us on the vases (Fig. 391). The decoration on the Orvieto vase (Fig. 392) probably shows how little

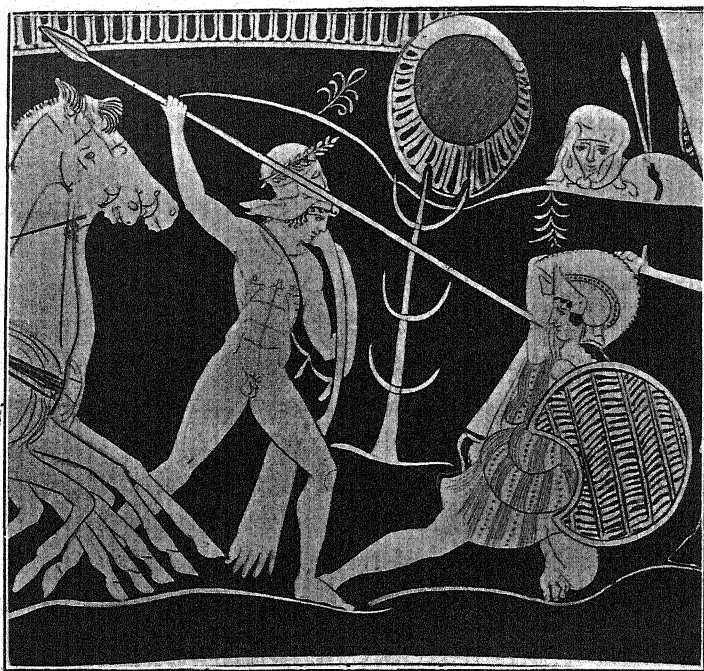
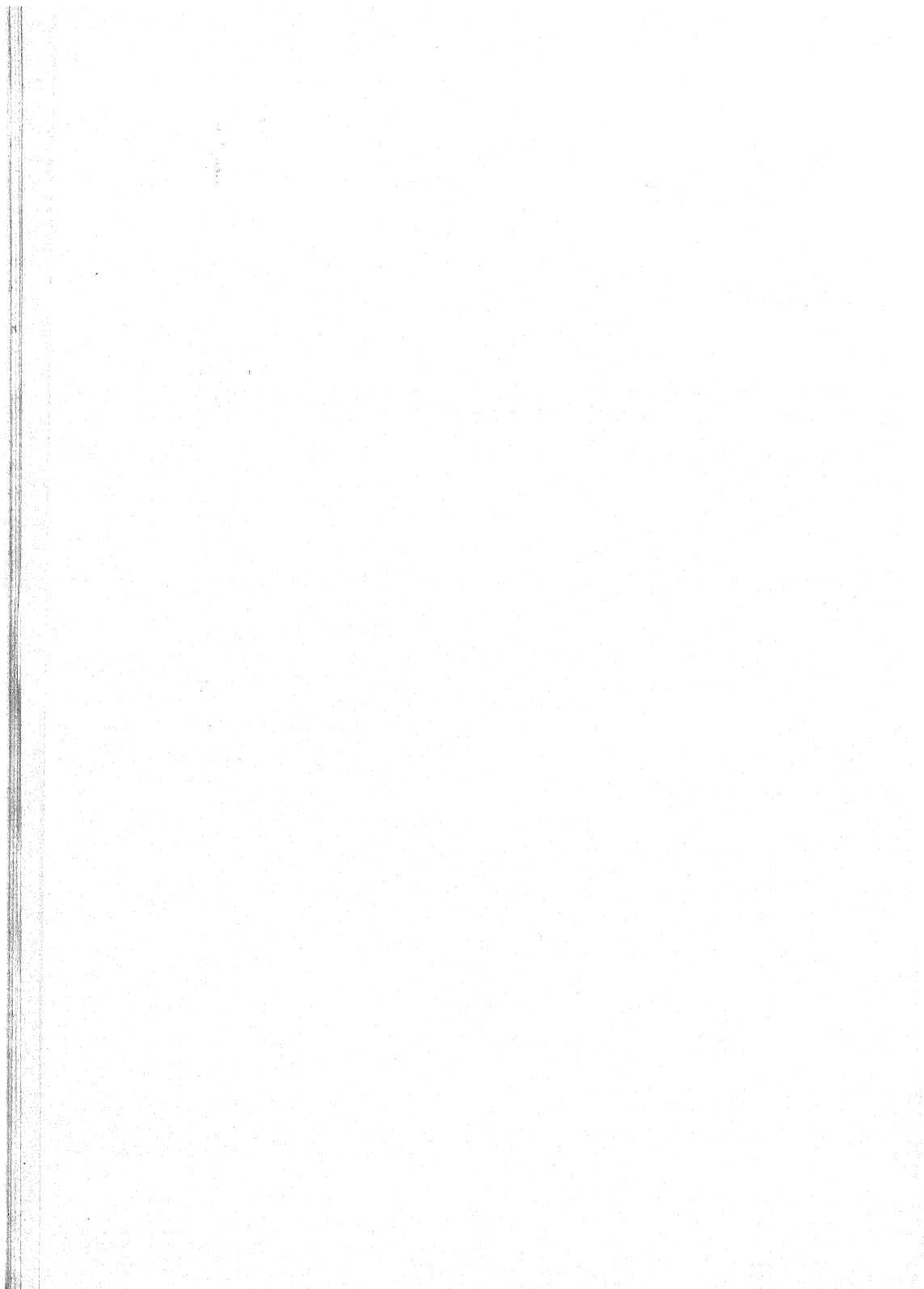


FIG. 391.—Red figure vase. New York. The head of the Amazon in the distance is as large as the head of the one in the foreground. She has her spears in the left hand and is represented full-face, perhaps to indicate her grief at not being able to assist her fallen companion. It is strange that an artist who could foreshorten the Amazon's leg should have given too frontal an appearance to the man's body. The tree is very conventional; the mark just above it is the spring of the handle of the vase. From Furtwängler and Reichhold's *Griechische Vasenmalerei*, by permission of Bruckmann & Co.

real progress he had made. Still it is an advance, and it marks the final separation of the art of drawing from that of sculpture in relief (see pp. 240-1), in which



FIG. 392.—Vase found at Orvieto, and generally called the Argonaut Vase. Dr. F. Hauser, in Furtwängler and Reichhold's *Griechische Vasenmalerei*, says it is probably an allegorical representation of the Greeks (as Phylen) camped round Hercules and preparing to attack the Persian army—symbolised by the distant figure retiring in dismay. Louvre Museum. From Furtwängler and Reichhold's *Griechische Vasenmalerei*, by permission of Bruckmann & Co.



perspective is really out of place. Perspective is indeed a most elaborate convention; it was utterly rejected by the predecessors of the Greeks. As Lange says, p. 22: "They must have known that a figure thirty yards off looked smaller than one ten yards off, but they also knew that both these figures were really of the same size, and they thought it unworthy of art to allow themselves to be deceived by an optical illusion. To represent the diminution due to perspective would have been regarded as a most ridiculous and childish fault."

In pictorial efforts from the very earliest ages onwards all the figures in any studied composition had been arranged on one uniform level, after the fashion of relief work on a frieze.³⁸ Instances of any transgression of this rule are almost unknown in Egyptian work, and there seems to be none in the Minoan. It is the departure from this custom which makes that rock picture in Algeria so remarkable (Fig. 82).

The painter of the Orvieto vase tried to obtain perspective by arranging his figures in different planes on various little hillocks. To the left a man in armour is disappearing behind a hill, and he is drawn on a smaller scale than the others, thus breaking through the convention that figures known to be of the same size must be drawn as large as those in the foreground, and not diminished on account of their being farther off.

The postures also are much more varied than those in the earlier pictures, and there is an attempt

at foreshortening the right thigh of the figure in front of the horse. Like so many other of these attempts, it evades the difficulty by concealing and only suggesting the foreshortened limb, but even

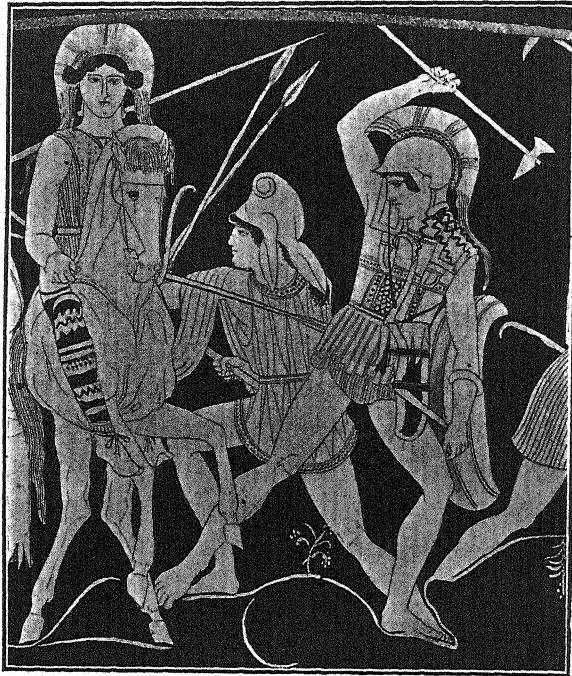
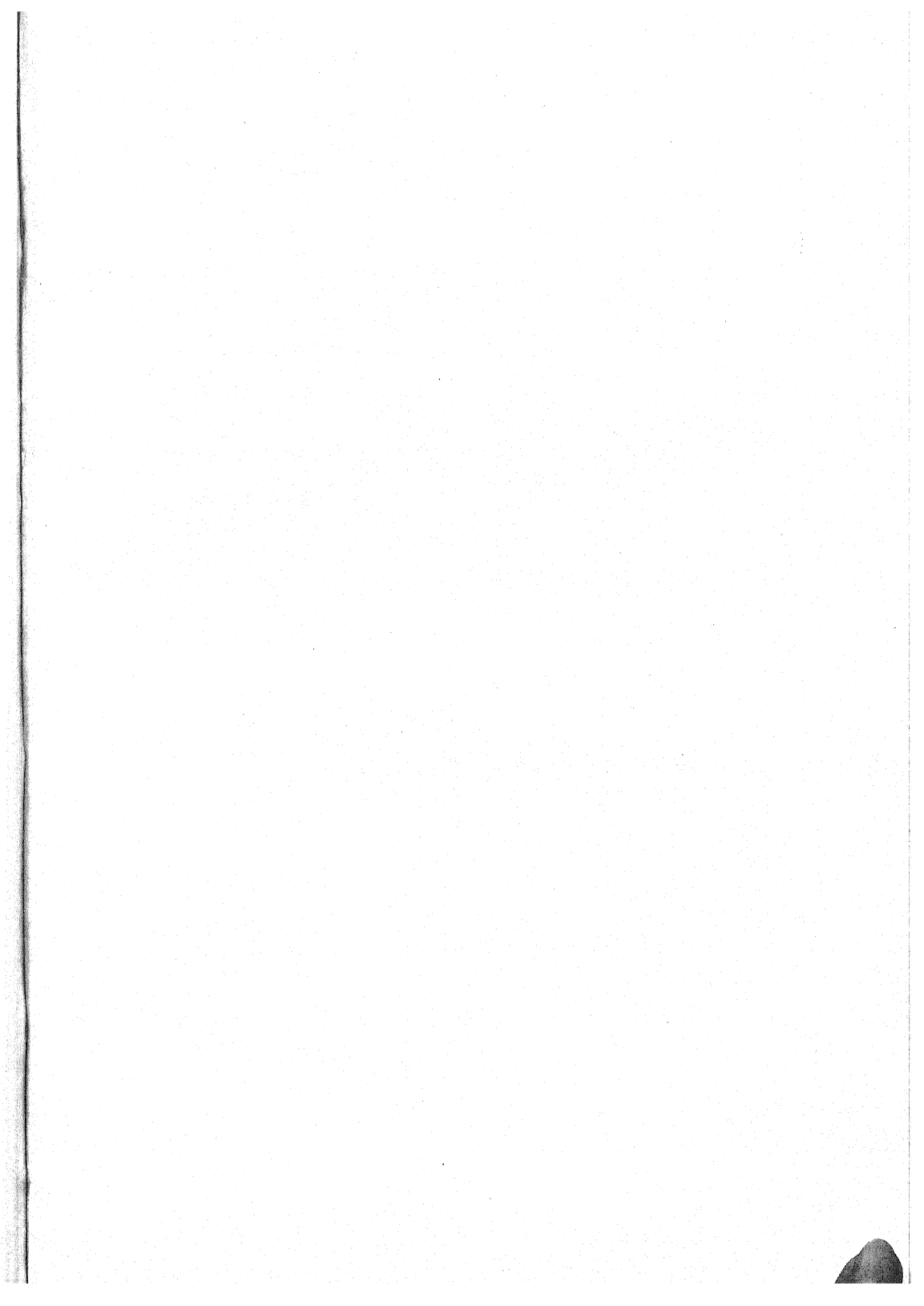
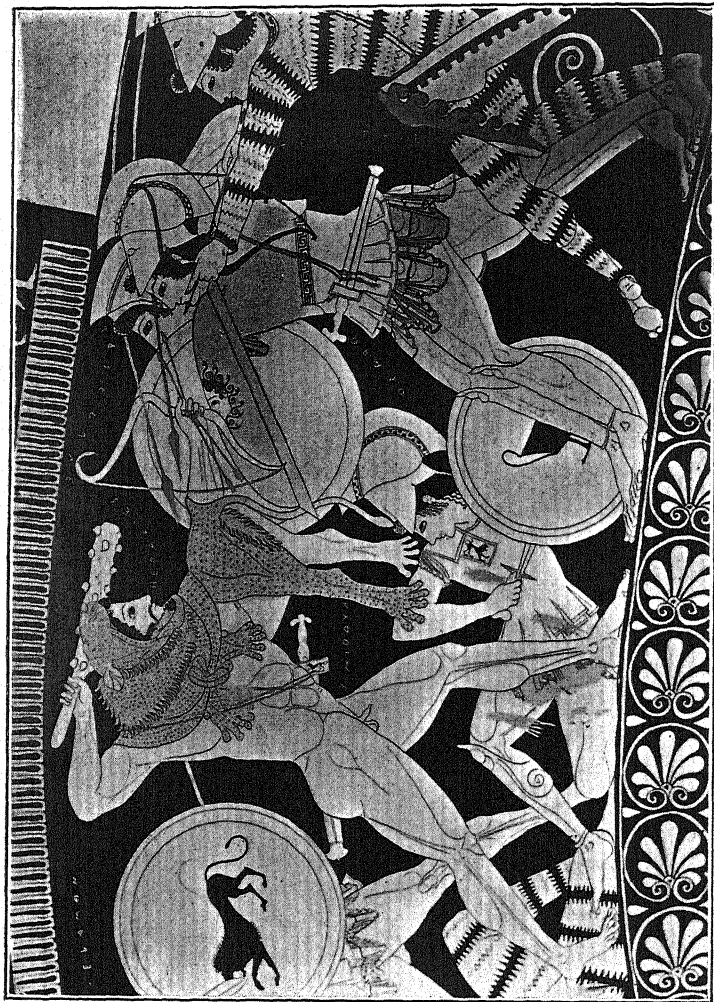


FIG. 393.—The only example of a horse and rider thus foreshortened, though horses drawing chariots were often given in this way. The difficulty of rendering the thigh is to a certain extent overcome by concealing it with the rider's right hand, thus giving her the appearance of taking no part in the contest. New York.^{67a} From Furtwängler and Reichhold's *Griechische Vasenmalerei*, by permission of Bruckmann & Co.

to make the attempt was a bold step in advance. Previously it seems to have been held that to depict a limb stretched towards or away from the beholder





To face p. 489

FIG. 394.—This large vase has been known to archaologists since 1723. It is now at Arezzo. The figures of the combatants are about eight inches high. The Amazon in the Scythian dress is twisting her foot in the manner often adopted by those who have aimed at a mark and are waiting to see the result. From Furtwängler and Reichhold's *Griechische Vasenmalerei*, by permission of Bruckmann & Co.

was beyond the proper scope of art. A better example is seen in the left leg of the Amazon (Fig. 391) and in the right foot of the archer (Fig. 394). Strange attempts at foreshortening the bodies of animals are seen in Figs. 393 and 395.

Another bold innovation found on this Orvieto

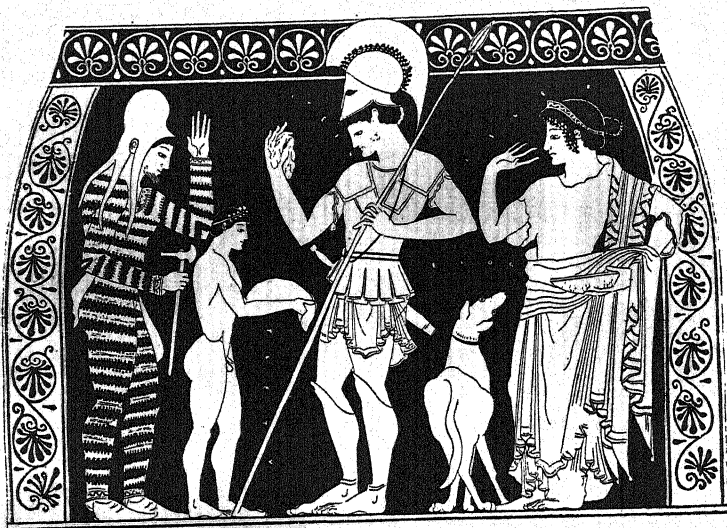


FIG. 395.—Greek warrior and a soldier in Scythian costume inspecting the omens brought by the boy from the sacrificed animal. Apparently they are not satisfactory, and the dog, foreshortened to prevent his spoiling the composition of the group, seems designed to express mute sympathy with his mistress. Wurzburg Museum. From Furtwängler and Reichhold's *Griechische Vasenmalerei*, by permission of Bruckmann & Co.

vase is the three-quarter face pose of some of the heads (Fig. 396). The drawing is not very successful, but it shows what varied experiments had been made by the painters of this age, and perhaps as far back as Kimon of Kleonæ. They seem to

have felt that they could not yet use that position for expressing either dignity or beauty. Their earlier

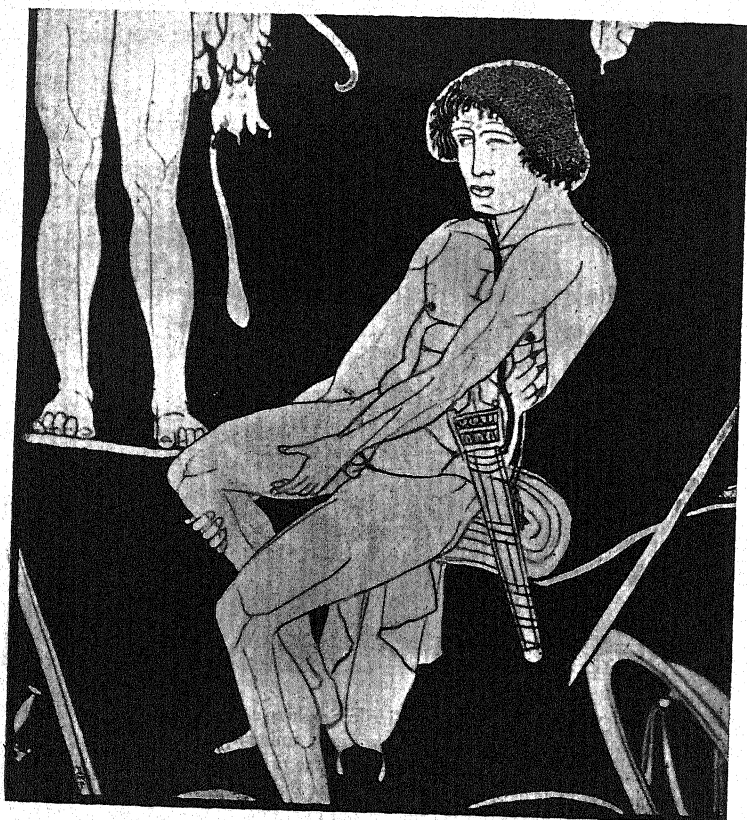


FIG. 396.—Unsuccessful three-quarter face. Enlarged from Fig. 392. About two-thirds of actual size. From Furtwängler and Reichhold's *Griechische Vasenmalerei*, by permission of Bruckmann & Co.

attempts were made with Centaurs (Fig. 397), for whose faces a misshapen appearance would not be inappropriate.

The full face, however, still remains unpopular ; it seems to have been used chiefly to express horror or distress. It is seen in pictures of Troilus about to be slain by Achilles (Fig. 389), of Kerkyon in

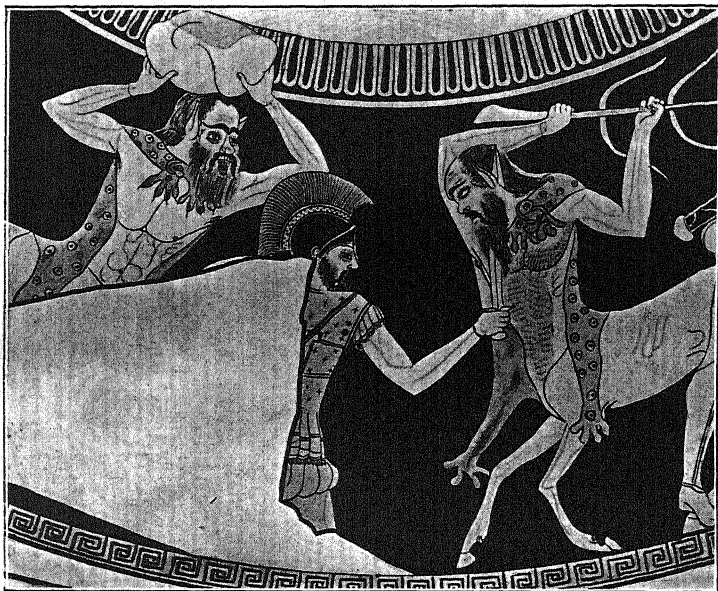


FIG. 397.—One of the fragments of a large Attic vase now in the Villa Papa Giuglio Museum at Rome. The painter of these figures was careful in his delineation of hair, drawing even the eye-lashes. The bent legs of the wounded centaur recall those of the horse in Fig. 68. From Furtwängler and Reichhold's *Griechische Vasenmalerei*, by permission of Bruckmann & Co.

his struggle with Hercules (Fig. 382), of a daughter of Niobe, the victim of Latona's wrath, of a Persian soldier struck down by a hoplite (Fig. 398), of a wounded Amazon wringing her hands in anguish (Fig. 399). Perhaps it has some connection with

old representations of the Medusa's head, which were always given in full face, or the two ideas may have acted and reacted upon one another. Satyrs are

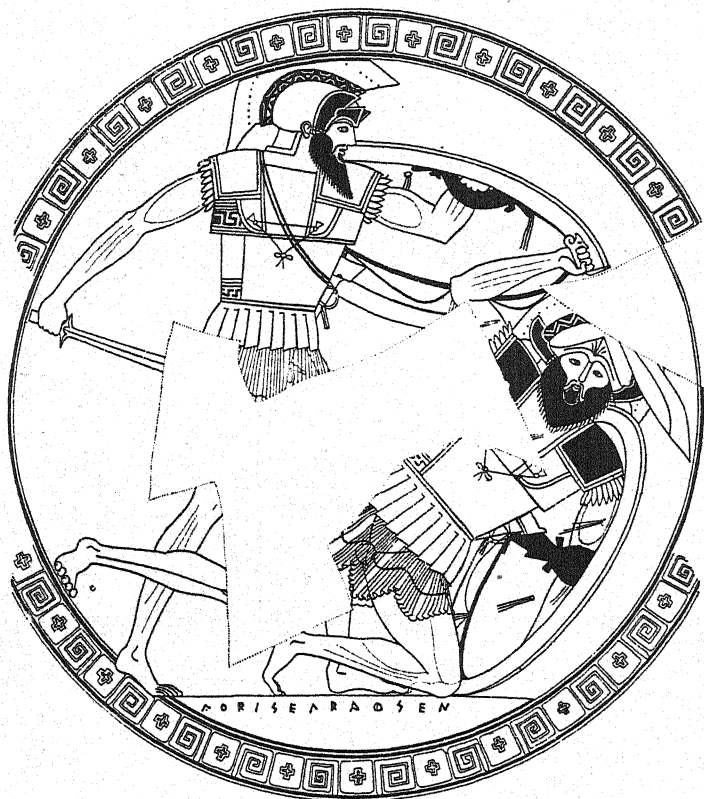


FIG. 398.—Red figure drawing in the interior of a kylix found at Corneto. It has the inscription ΔΟΡΙΣ ΕΡΑΘΟΣ ΕΝ — Duris painted (this). Berlin Museum. Half actual size.

occasionally depicted in this way (Fig. 400), a reminiscence probably of the masks worn by those who acted as satyrs in the theatres.⁶⁸



FIG. 399.—This illustration and those in Figs. 391 and 392 represent Attic work towards the end of the best period of vase painting, *i.e.* about 460 B.C. The subject is the slaying of Penthesilea, the Queen of the Amazons, by Achilles. According to the legend he fell in love with her when their eyes met after he had plunged his sword into her breast; a pathetic parable of the lust of domination defeating its own ends, the conqueror realising all too late the misery that he has brought upon himself as well as upon others. From Furtwängler and Reichhold's *Griechische Vasenmalerei*, by permission of Bruckmann & Co.

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In such a period of artistic expansion it was only natural that painters should be dissatisfied with the

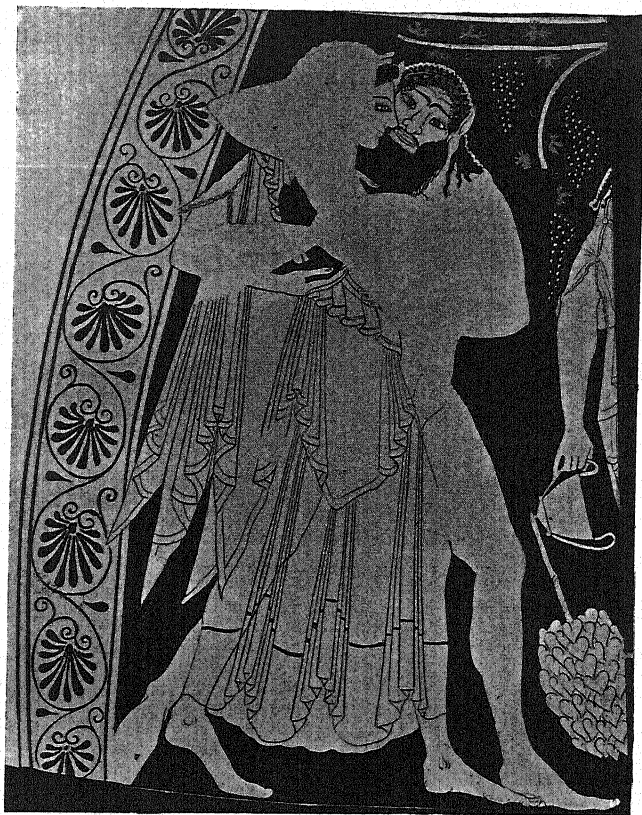


FIG. 400.—Vase, signed by Phintias, found in necropolis of Corneto. The nostrils were seldom shown in early Greek work. Compare with Figs. 195 and 200. From Furtwängler and Reichhold's *Griechische Vasenmalerei*, by permission of Bruckmann & Co.

time-honoured treatment of the human eye. The old distinction between male and female eyes, as shown in the Attic black vases, was at once aban-

done by the painters of the red figures. The pupil was now drawn as a black circular spot enclosed by lids somewhat like those on the black-figured vases (Fig. 401), but the upper segment was larger. The lids soon begin to take a more natural shape, and have an eyebrow added over to



FIG. 401.



FIG. 402.



FIG. 403.



FIG. 404.—Gradual improvement of the eye in profile faces on red figure vases.

them. Then the pupil was rendered as a circle with a dot inside, but the plain circular spot also remained in favour (Fig. 402).

The greatest improvement of all was when they attempted to give some expression to the face by placing the pupil nearer to the upper or to the lower lid (Fig. 403), thus indicating that the eye was meant to be looking upwards or downwards, and not

fixed in that stony stare which is as characteristic of primitive drawing as it is of all primitive sculpture. The old convention, however, still held good, that the eye should be given "in plan" as if part of a full-face drawing; but, having abandoned the fixed central position for the pupil, they soon saw the advantage of moving it more to the front. Then they ceased giving that part of the pupil and those lines of the lids which cannot really be seen in a purely side-face view (Fig. 404), and thus at last they arrived at a result which the world had taken so many thousands of years to achieve—the real true profile eye.⁶⁹

It may seem a small and insignificant detail, but it shows that in visualising the human body painters had at last succeeded in acquiring a real grasp of it as a whole. Hitherto they had had good mental pictures of various parts of it, but these pictures had been separate entities, and had been only loosely and often incorrectly joined together. For instance, the early Egyptians had a clear perception of the appearance of a man's chest as seen from in front, but they supported it on a nondescript waist and a pair of legs seen in profile. They surmounted it with a profile face, which is the view most easily retained by inexperienced minds.⁷⁰ In that profile face they inserted a full-face eye, thus showing that they could not grasp the general appearance even of such a small subject as the head. In later times they must have realised the incongruity, but art was then controlled

by priests who were rulers and not leaders. Nor were the people desirous of being led. The Asiatic iron had entered into their soul: how could they have any sense of what was right and reasonable? Their function was to obey and not to think, to do as their forebears had done, and not to criticise the work of their superiors. If Europe had not been able to resist the march of Oriental despotism we should to-day be giving full-face eyes to profile faces. In Rome, when Diocletian the magnificent had destroyed the last vestiges of freedom, it is curious, and perhaps significant, to note that then again in profile faces the full-face eye is seen.⁷¹

Having triumphed over all the elementary difficulties of their art, Greek painters evidently made rapid strides towards the successful representation not only of men and women, but also of their emotions and ideas. Even of such an early painter as Polygnotus (about 450 B.C., a contemporary of Phidias) it was said that, in his figure of Polyxena, "the whole Trojan war might be read in her eyes." The Greeks had now outgrown their childhood, and had entered into a larger world, where unfortunately we only know of their doings by vague reports, for no single specimen has as yet been found. That they did not hesitate to tackle the hardest problems of foreshortening and of composition is evident from the accounts written by contemporaries, and also from the copies in mosaic that have survived.

There was one branch of painting in which the

Greeks did not excel. The few extant copies of landscape pictures show a stiff and realistic style not unlike scene painting, from which indeed it is said to be derived. Apparently no nation of antiquity had any great love for the natural beauty of uncultivated country, nor any delight in the sombre forms of lofty mountains with their mysterious depths of shade, or in sun-kissed radiant clouds with their equally mysterious vales of light. The visions of such beauty seem to have been denied to them, and were perhaps as unrecognisable as to most Europeans are the beautiful forms of natural rocks and stones, so plainly visible to cultured Japanese. Indeed the love of nature pure and simple apart from its relationship to man is of quite recent growth. It is doubtful whether it is not really a feeling of impatience with our ordinary surroundings that has led to a desire for the representation of lonely forests, wild rugged mountains, or fiercely raging seas. Such pictures, except as a background for the energies of man, would probably not have been intelligible to a Greek, certainly not to an Egyptian or a Chaldean. It may perhaps also be taken as a sign that we moderns are beginning to grasp the idea of nature as a whole, to understand that the life of trees, the formation of rocks, and the strange movements of great waters are equally with man productions of the same mysterious force, and parts of one well co-ordinated scheme.

By the thinkers of all ages, but especially by the Greeks, this force seems to have been visualised as

taking a human shape, and in no other way, unless we consider the vague conceptions of animism or of pantheism as definite expressions of real thought. The Greek saw Poseidon riding upon the foaming waves, he imagined graceful nymphs swaying in the slim branches of young trees, or he shuddered at the gnarled trunks and stretched-out arms of ancient trees fast hastening to decay. To him the stars were children, diving from the vault of heaven when the great sun-god appeared (Fig. 405). For him the sun and moon were bright immortal human forms rejoicing in their strength and renewing it from day to day, or else from month to month. As to the lesser gods, their existence may have seemed to him analogous to the life of ordinary men. A stream would be the temporal embodiment of such a god or goddess; she might be pictured as a joyous maiden radiant in the sun, leaping from crag to crag. Then when the waters failed the maiden died, or was merged in that great source from and to which all living waters flow. What better expression can we find in art or literature of that illusive mental picture, Personality, than the analogy of a flowing stream? Both of them have puzzled the framers of definitions. What are the essential elements of either of them? Can we say that to-day this is the same stream that we saw yesterday? The banks are still the same, but the waters have moved on, and have been replaced by other waters. Do, then, the banks constitute its personality, so that we still may say this is the same stream? What



FIG. 405.—The “Blacas vase,” a crater 12½ inches high, from Apulia. 420 B.C. British Museum, E. 466. As the chariot of the sun approaches, the moon rides down behind the hill; the little stars begin to disappear; the dawn with rosy wings attempts to seize the morning star, and he, reluctant to forsake the sky, threatens his fond pursuer with a stone.

Compare this Greek rendering of a sunrise with the treatment of the same subject by a landscape painter. A whole chapter might be written on the differences and similarities of the inspirations producing these two styles. The Greek expression is more ideal than a naturalistic rendering by a great modern master, and yet it is more limited. There is no sense of immensity and mystery; the forces of the universe are reduced to human forms, brilliant and glorious indeed, but not beyond the comprehension of mere mortals. From Furtwängler and Reichhold's *Griechische Vasenmalerei*, by permission of Bruckmann & Co.

if the waters have moved on, and none have come to take their place? Can we assert that permanent dry banks without the ever-changing waters have any title to be called a stream? Thus is it with man's personality. We know not what it is, nor whence it comes. Without a body how can we conceive of it, and yet the lifeless body is but as the dry banks of a dead river.

We have not yet made any great advance beyond the old conceptions and expressions of the Greeks. And when we come to talk of art and of its influences, of its growth, or of its swift decay, what do we think it is? It is so easy to be misled by words and phrases. We are accustomed to talk about and to believe in the great power of the sea. But the sea has no power. It is merely a helpless mass of water. Certainly it is a wonderful instrument when driven by the wind. And then what is the wind? Merely a helpless mass of air having no power of its own. A powerful instrument indeed, both for evil and for good, when set in motion by gravitation or other forces of the universe. And what are they? Whence do they come, and whither do they tend? Those who can give an answer to this question can also give the full answer to the first question in this book—What is art?

NOTES

THESE notes are not explanatory. They are only intended for readers who wish to enter rather more fully into some of the questions raised in this book.

I, p. 4. These extraordinary outbursts of development are just as frequent and just as unaccountable in animal and in plant life, in the present day and in geologic ages. One of the most striking evolutions is that which took place in the order represented abundantly in most ancient times by the nautilus. This family inhabited shells with plain divisions, or "sutures," between its air chambers, and lived its simple life without much change for untold æons. Then, in the secondary geologic period—only a few hundred thousand or a few million years ago—another family of the same order blossomed out with more complicated sutures, gradually assuming larger and still more complicated forms, with so many varieties that over five hundred species are known to geologists. At the end of that period the whole family suddenly died out, while its humbler relatives still continued to exist, and may be found in tropic seas even at the present day.

2, p. 5. Of course little attention need be paid to newspaper articles which appear from time to time vaunting the wonderful discoveries in America of relics, "probably the most ancient specimens of human handiwork in the world" (e.g. *Black and White*, 28/8/09). American archaeologists who have devoted their lives to the study of such

relics are agreed in declaring that no sufficient data have yet been found to warrant any calculations as to their origin or their relative age.

A few books have been published on the subject by enthusiastic theorists, but they do not show any signs of a thorough acquaintance with the facts that have already been ascertained, nor much appreciation of the great difficulties to be overcome before speculative explanations can be regarded as having even a fair amount of probability.

3, p. 7. The dynastic flint-chipping seems to have been a deliberate return to an archaic system, for the blades were first shaped and polished to a smooth surface, and then one side was chipped again to form those wonderfully symmetric furrows which are so characteristic of Egyptian work (Fig. 133). The cause of this retrogression was probably that hankering after worn-out usages and conventions which is noticeable in so many religions.

Flint-chipping—or knapping, as it used to be called in the old flint-gun days—is often said to be one of the lost arts, and people with archaic minds talk admiringly of the unrivalled skill of our forefathers. It is only lost in the same sense that many other arts are lost—that is to say, there is no great reason for practising it. It still survives at Brandon, in Suffolk, and it was worked with great success some sixty or seventy years ago by forgers of stone weapons for the collectors of curiosities. The exposure of the fraud gave great delight to those who mistook all collectors for scientists, and hoped that science could be discredited by such forgeries.

In the Pitt-Rivers Museum at Oxford may be seen some delicate fish-hooks made out of flint by the learned curator, Mr. Henry Balfour.

Very fair representations of animals in flint have been found in Egypt (Fig. 406), and also in Russia. To recognise anything but a casual coincidence in some of them requires almost as great a stretch of imagination as is required by

the collectors of natural and unworked flints which happen to have some resemblance to human or to other forms of life.

4, p. 12. Drawings have been found in the French caves at La Grèze, La Calévie, Bernifal, La Mouthe, Teyjat, Combarelles, Font de Gaume ; all these are in the Dordogne

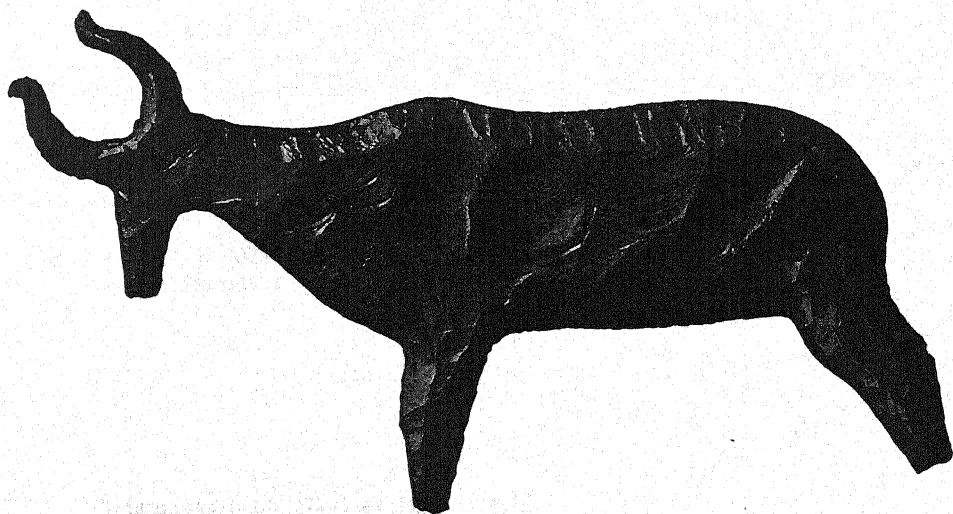


FIG. 406.—Chipped flint animal from Egypt, supposed to represent an antelope. Berlin Museum. Reproduced by permission of the publishers from *Die Umschau*, 1903. ("Aegyptische Tierbilder als Kieselartefakte," pp. 804-6, G. Schweinfurth.)

department. Pair non Pair is in the Gironde, Mas d'Azil and Niaux in the Ariège, Chabot in the Ardèche, Marsoulas and Gargas in the Haute Garonne.

In Spanish caves at Covalanas, Castillo, Hornos de la Peña, Santa Isabel, La Venta de la Perra, La Haza, and elsewhere.

In *l'Anthropologie*, Jan.-Feb. 1912, there is a description of some open-air paintings found at Alpera in the south-east

of Spain. They are of the same age (Magdalenian) as those at Cogul; they contain seventy figures of men, sixteen of whom have bows and arrows.

There are some crude drawings in a cave called La Grotta Romanelli, near Castro, Otranto, Italy, which were thought to be palæolithic, but Professor Pigorini considers them to be of later origin.

5, p. 16. Better drawings of mammoth had long been known, but they were small sketches on bone. This discovery on the walls of a cave of a large representation of a totally extinct animal helped to fix the relative date of the other cave pictures. The mammoth seems to have become scarce before the cavemen's art had arrived at its prime, for no very good paintings of that animal have yet been found. The later representations of it (Fig. 19) seem to have been made by men to whom it was not as familiar as the bison or the horse.

6, p. 37. The long-disputed question about the actual existence of a pygmy race in Africa is now definitely set at rest, and the belief in the former presence of such a race in Europe is continually receiving fresh confirmation, since not only single skeletons, but also groups of forty or fifty have lately been found. Most of the palæolithic skeletons are those of people of ordinary size; some are even beyond the average of the present day.

The existence of the steatopygous type (Fig. 276) in prehistoric times can only be inferred from the numerous figurines found in various parts of Europe and in Egypt.

7, p. 39. *Korrespondenz Blatt.* (Sep.-Dez. 1909, p. 85-8) of the *Archiv. für Anthropologie; Organ der deutschen Gesellschaft für Anthropologie, Ethnologie, und Urgeschichte*, 1910, Band IX., Heft 1/2 Brunswick.

8, p. 41. For some account of the origins of modesty,

see *Die Anfänge der Kunst*; Grosse, 1893. An American translation was published in 1907.

9, p. 43. Dr. Lalanne has lately discovered three human figures carved in high relief on the rock in the shelter at

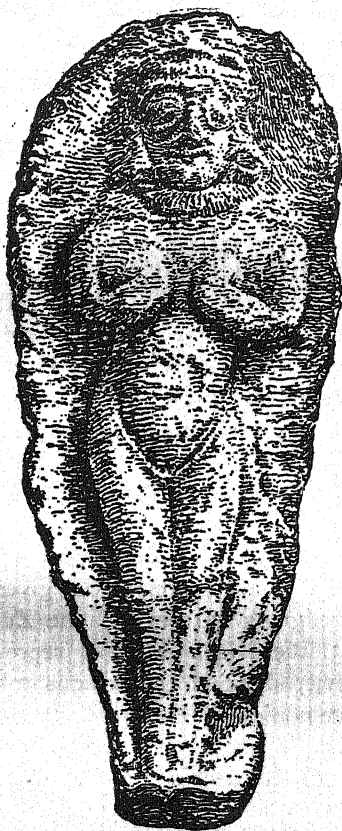


FIG. 407.—Baked clay image in relief found at Moussian, Persia; probably five or six thousand years old. The images found in this part of Asia are not steatopygous.

Laussel. One is male, and about nine inches long; the other two are female (about twenty inches long), very similar to the

nude figurines found in Chaldea (Fig. 407) and throughout the whole Mediterranean district. One of the females holds a horn resembling those held by figures carved on the dolmens of a later period in France. A detailed report was given in *l'Anthropologie*, Jan. 1912, and photographs of them appeared in the *Illustrated London News*, 13th July 1912.

10, p. 57. M. Salomon Reinach gave me this account of his experience with a grown-up man. "A Turk in Asia Minor had a pretty horse; I drew the horse's head, but the Turk protested that my work was bad because his horse had two eyes and two nostrils. My drawing was a profile."

11, p. 89. The Director of the Royal Natural History at Vienna tells me that Dr. Rudolf Pöch will give copies of these pictures in a large work which he will shortly publish about his travels in South Africa.

In the *Transactions of the South African Philosophical Society* for 1906 there was an article by Dr. L. Peringuey on "Rock Engravings," and in vol. xviii. (1907-9) there was a "second note." Both were illustrated with several plates.

12, p. 92. *The Twenty-third Report of the Bureau of American Ethnology* (Washington, 1904) gives a very detailed account of the religious customs of the Zuni Indians. In Plate 58, p. 245, there is a coloured representation of the altar of Uhuhukwe, showing the various tokens and images used in these ceremonies.

13, p. 96. S. Reinach's *Cultes, Mythes, et Religions*, vol. i., p. 135.

14, p. 101. Miss J. E. Harrison in the *Annual of the British School at Athens*, vol. xv., p. 327, gave a good résumé of the opinions of anthropologists on this subject. "It is not so much about the family and the domestic hearth that the beginnings of the arts cluster, as about the institu-

tion known as the 'Man's House.' Here, unencumbered by woman, man practises and develops his various crafts. . . . Even after marriage, when he counts as an elderly man, he returns to the 'Man's House' to keep in touch with civilisation and the outside world."

15, p. 101. "In the beginning man went forth each day—some to do battle, some to the chase, others again to dig and delve in the field—all that they might gain and live or lose and die. Until there was found among them one differing from the rest, whose pursuits attracted him not, and so he stayed by the tents with the women and traced strange designs with a burnt stick upon a gourd.

"This man who took no joy in the ways of his brethren—who cared not for conquest and fretted in the field—this deviser of the beautiful—who perceived in nature about him curious curvings, as faces are seen in the fire—this dreamer apart, was the first artist."—"Ten o'clock," James M'Neill Whistler.

16, p. 112. *The Native Races of South Africa* (1905), G. W. Stow, p. 113.

17, p. 113. Prof. Breuil has lately been spending some months in the mountains of Andalusia examining some cave paintings discovered by Col. Willoughby Verner. A preliminary report was published in *l'Anthropologie*, but another season will have to be devoted to the cave before it is exhausted.

18, p. 126. The spiral has been said to be the original form of the meander (the fret or key) pattern, for its curved lines would naturally take that form if reproduced by plaiting or embroidery. Consult Dr. Haddon's *Evolution in Art*, 1895, for the résumé of the theories on this subject.

A curious parallelism of designs is found on the ceiling of a tomb at Thebes (Fig. 408), which certainly seems to show

that the Egyptian decorators considered the spiral and the meander as interchangeable decorative units. Vases have been found in Crete ornamented with a very similar combination of spirals. It seems to be a natural deduction to suppose that some day the meander will be discovered also in Crete. Indeed it is quite possible that it may have been used earlier still, for it is not likely that the cavemen's spirals

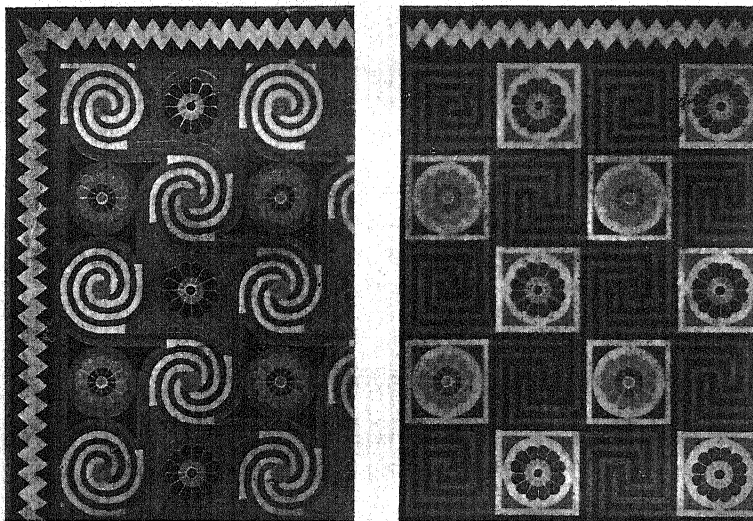


FIG. 408.—Designs painted in brilliant colours on the ceiling of an eighteenth-dynasty tomb at Gournah, near Thebes.

died away without having any influence on the designs of their successors.

19, p. 138. It has been said that their fellow-men would not have consented to serve as models for fear of becoming subject to the possessor of the picture, but such a belief would have worked both ways, and would surely have induced some artists to do their utmost to secure good

pictures of those over whom they desired to have power. The absence of such pictures seems more easily explained by the general inconsistency of human nature. Man never acts entirely on the principles he professes to believe, but carries them out to their logical conclusion only when they do not clash too much with his other interests.

20, p. 143. Owing to this habit of procrastination, I have not been able to give any reproductions of the very interesting coloured plates in Herr von Stern's *Pre-mykenische Kultur*, published by the Archæological Society of Moscow. The president promised to send it to where I was staying in Italy two years ago. My postal order was not cashed for nearly a year, and the book itself has not yet arrived, though I am told by my Russian acquaintances that it will come some day.

21, p. 154. Year after year, sheet upon sheet, these fertilising films have covered and preserved the relics of man's work, thus forming those mysterious volumes in which are hidden the records of the land. In no other country has the archæologist such an extensive and trustworthy basis for his calculations as to the age of various strata and of the objects found in them.

Unfortunately very few relics have as yet been recovered from these deposits, for they are some sixty feet or more in depth, and are generally waterlogged. Even when the difficulties of making excavations in them shall have been overcome, it seems unlikely that very many remains can have withstood the annual soakings to which they have been exposed for unnumbered centuries. Still there is just a chance that some day, deep down below the present surface, discoveries may be made which will enable archæologists to form a more accurate estimate of the age of those relics which are now found so abundantly in ancient graves and dwelling-places just beyond the reach of the waters of the Nile.

22, p. 156. I do not think that the basket was originally made to serve this purpose, for, until American machine-ground flour was available, Indian dough must have been very limited in quantity. In fact, it almost seems as if their flour had formerly seldom or never been collected and then made into dough. A small quantity of corn was roughly ground and immediately moistened with water and spread out on two hot stones in order to bake it. The resultant wafer bread was not nice. The Indian women still grind their corn with a large pebble worked up and down on a flat sloping stone, very similar to the old grinding-stones found in Egyptian graves.

23, p. 162. It is rather strange that in Egypt the passage should have always been horizontal, while in other countries vertical passages (see Fig. 223-*bis*) were more common. A great deal has been written about the shape, size, and number of these perforations, but I have not been able to find any classification of them with respect to their horizontal or vertical direction.

24, p. 164. It may seem inconsistent that, after having said that Egyptian pottery was probably made by the women, I should in this passage talk about the potters as if they were men. But whenever any sphere of work becomes "industrialised"—that is, organised as a means of gaining a living independently of the other duties of life—then women appear to be at a disadvantage, and it passes out of their hands as a specially feminine branch of work. Spinning, weaving, baking, even clothes-making have become masculine pursuits, and all material progress seems accompanied by a diminution in the extent of woman's sphere of usefulness in her own home. Even in quite recent times modern customs or inventions have lessened the value of women's home-work. A man is no longer dependent on a woman for most of his little luxuries and comforts; in fact he is often better off and more comfortable—as regards mere material comfort—without a wife than with one.

25, p. 170. The Cairo Museum, after having recorded all necessary particulars, sells its superfluous specimens, a system which might well be adopted by many other museums. The result would be beneficial to the buyers, because then they could be fairly sure of the genuineness of their specimens. It would be advantageous to the museums, because then they would not have the prices absurdly raised against them by ignorant but wealthy curiosity collectors. It would assist science, because all casual discoverers would be encouraged to bring their finds to the museums and not to the dealers, thus ensuring a better record of many important details which are generally not recorded since they do not add much to the money value of the specimens.

26, p. 173. Without daring to express any opinion on such a very technical question, one cannot help thinking that although these conclusions may be right, they are based on insufficient data. Even apart from the difficulty of estimating what proportion of foreign types should be found in the burial-places of nations which have been successfully invaded, it seems by no means certain that these foreign types would be so persistent as to leave widely-spread evidence of their coming. The conclusions arrived at on this point by Dr. Boas are very startling. If it be true that the descendants of dolichocephalic individuals may, after one or two generations become brachycephalic, and vice versa, all the arguments based on skull and bone measurements will have to be reconsidered.

27, p. 190. See Dr. G. Schweinfurth's article in *Die Umschau* (Frankfurt a. M., 1903, p. 806).

28, p. 193. These zigzag lines are seen clearly in Fig. 187. Similar lines drawn horizontally are frequently found on vases without any other decoration (Fig. 129), but comparatively seldom on boat vases, and then they are generally placed above the boats (Figs. 119 and 120). That

position, however, would not necessarily indicate that they were not intended to represent water, for, in primitive drawings, the relative position of objects seems to be considered of little importance.

It is unfortunate that there are so few representations of water in Chaldean art; the only ones that I am acquainted with merely indicate running water by a number of wavy lines. In Assyrian art these wavy lines are generally topped with little spirals when rivers or lakes are pictured. In Prof. Petrie's Exhibition in 1912 there were some first-dynasty clay jar sealings from Tarkhan, showing rows of spirals and crocodiles. If it could be proved that the spirals were intended to represent water, they would form a very interesting parallelism with the Assyrian system, but as the spiral is the common hieroglyph for a lake, and also for one hundred, more evidence will have to be forthcoming before it can be classified as a pictograph of water.

29, p. 205. A few cylinder seals have been found in twelfth-dynasty deposits (about 2000 B.C.), but so little is known of the period between the sixth and twelfth dynasties, that it is impossible to trace development or degeneration with any accuracy.

30, p. 217. References to the prowess of the kings do certainly occur in Egyptian literature, but they dwell more on the great numbers of the enemy than on their valour or skill.

31, p. 218. It may only be a coincidence, but it is rather curious, that the spiral in palæolithic France should have apparently represented cattle (*pecunia*), and in Egypt one hundred, while in Polynesia at the present day it is the sign for a sum of money.

32, p. 220. The flat band was in Greek times generally carved to represent a sort of hairy fringe, but in those grand sculptured lions in the North Egyptian Gallery of the British

Museum (Plate xxxvi. in the *Guide*) the band is still quite plain. It may be that these sculptures were executed by a Syrian or Babylonian artist. One of them was made for Amen-hotep III, and the other was dedicated to him. This king married the daughters of several rulers of Western Asia, and his son, Amen-hotep IV (afterwards called Akhenaten), seems to have been greatly influenced by foreign artists, though at present it is not known whether that influence came from Syria or only from Crete.

There are so few good representations of lions in Egyptian work that their development cannot be traced. The concentric semi-circles indicating the hair of the mane (as in Figs. 145 and 159) are not found later than the first dynasty. Then there is a gap of two thousand years, quite barren of any representations of lions which would show the progress or decay of this specially Egyptian mode of rendering the hair. In the papyrus of Ani (nineteenth dynasty) the lions' manes (British Museum facsimile, Nos. 7 and 10) are drawn in the Chaldean manner with pointed locks of hair (Fig. 246), which is also the style adopted in Cretan (Fig. 340-b), in Assyrian, and in Greek work.

33, p. 239. In some books (*e.g.* Girard's *Peinture Antique*) the Egyptians are said to have shown some knowledge of perspective. That statement seems based on very few and very inconclusive examples, such as rows of soldiers, in which occasionally the perspective is not altogether wrong.

The usual way of rendering figures on a more distant plane was to draw them of the same size as the other figures, and to place them in the upper part of the picture.

34, p. 247. This word affords a good example of the difficulty (see p. 274) of recognising the names of the people and places mentioned by different writers. The name of this heretic king is spelled—

Akhenaten by Petrie.

Akhunaten by King and Hall.

Akhounaton by George Bénédite.

Akhnaton by Weigall.

Ecknaton by Spiegelberg.

Ikhnaton by Breasted.

Chueneten by Woermann.

Khu-en-Aten by British Museum.

Khouniatonon by Maspero.

On the other hand, sometimes the difference of a single letter will show that the person named is widely removed from his apparent namesake.

35, p. 247. Birch. *Ancient History from the Monuments, Egypt* (not dated, S.P.C.K.), p. 109.

36, p. 257. A small fortified camp had to be constructed before any other digging could be done. When the statues and other antiquities were being transported by boat, M. de Morgan and his fellow-workers were sometimes obliged to take cover behind the packing-cases in order to escape the bullets of marauders. He has published an interesting little book relating some of these incidents.

A good account of the troubles of archæologists in Asia is given by the venerable explorer Dr. Pumpelly in the reports of his excavations in Turkestan, published by the Carnegie Institute (Washington) in 1905 and 1908. His discoveries were very numerous, but do not throw much light on the evolution of art in that country. The inhabitants of the buried cities he explored do not seem to have belonged to the same race or to the same phase of civilisation as the Elamites. Apparently they developed independently, and at a later period.

37, p. 271. The idea of fruitfulness rather than of beauty may be the motive of that drawing. The same motive is often found in Egyptian wall-paintings (Fig. 409) of much later date, but all these trees are mere diagrams, without any play of light and shade in their foliage. Indeed,

in a country where there are no woods or forests, an appreciation of tree-life seems scarcely possible. Even in countries

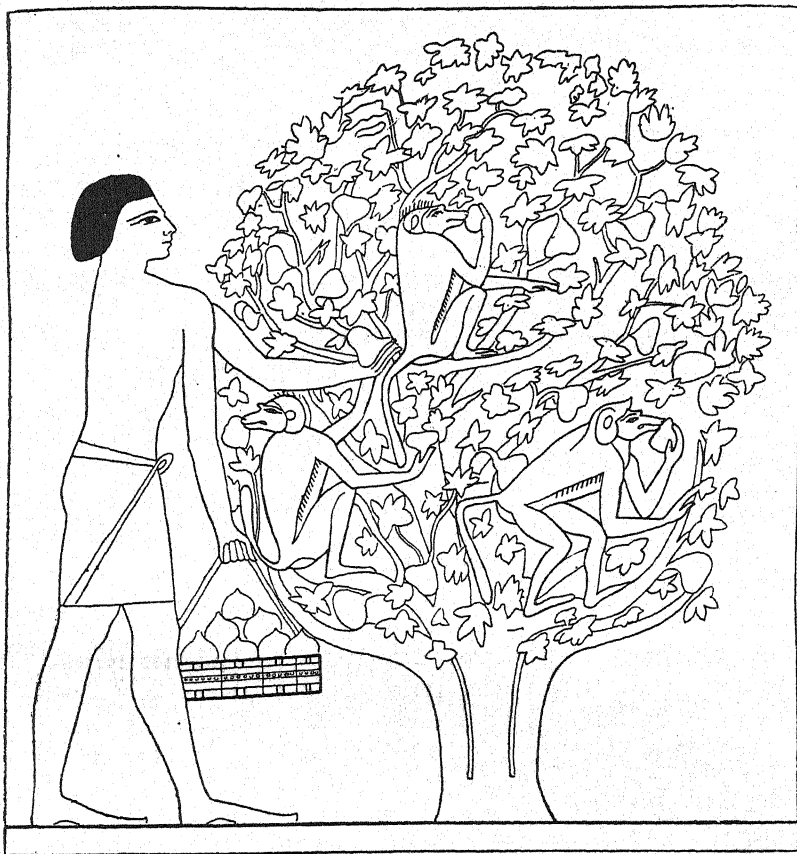


FIG. 409.—Part of a painting in a twelfth-dynasty tomb at Beni Hassan. I do not remember its style of colouring, and I have not been able to obtain any good copy of it. The one given in Lepsius' *Denkmäler*, II., Pl. 127, does not seem very satisfactory.

where trees grow wild and free the idea of their beauty and mystery has only in recent times found actual expression.

38, p. 272. These vases have been examined by expert potters from the Sèvres porcelain manufactory. Their opinion is that the work was certainly done on a slowly rotating wheel. That very ancient machine known as the potter's wheel was probably not invented by any single race, but evolved at different times in different countries in accordance with their conditions and requirements.

The first improvement must have been the exchanging of the original mat basis for a slab of stone or wood; then a pivot was inserted beneath to steady it; then it was raised slightly from the ground and supported only on its pivot; then it was raised still higher, and a second wheel added on the ground level so that it could be turned easily by a man's foot while his hands were engaged in shaping the clay on the upper wheel. Thus swifter rotation became possible, and large vases were more easily constructed. Pottery-making became a trade requiring more muscular exertion and more regularity of work than could be given to it by women. Therefore they had to abandon it, for, until a race begins to decay no work interfering with the production and rearing of children will be commonly undertaken by the females.

39, p. 276. This incongruity of titles does not necessarily detract from their value: it only shows how men cling to old ideals long after they have become useless or even pernicious. In certain savage states where the ability to steal was a sign of superior intelligence, the king was saluted as "Oh, great thief!" If these tribes should some day cease to consider stealing as a royal road to wealth, they will nevertheless continue to address their kings as "thieves," and perhaps humbler individuals will aspire to the title of "cheat," or "pickpocket." The widespread poverty of invention as regards titles is shown at the present day in republican America, where the working-men could think of no better name than "Knights of Labour" for the members of their association.

40, p. 284. The occurrence of a Greek cross on ancient objects used to be considered as determinative of the limit of their date, but it is now known to be much more ancient than was formerly supposed possible; in fact, a cross surrounded by a circle has been found in a palæolithic cave. The svastika, or fylfot, so common on early Greek pottery (Figs. 371, 373, and 376), and at one time considered as proving a connection with India, has been found in the ancient deposits

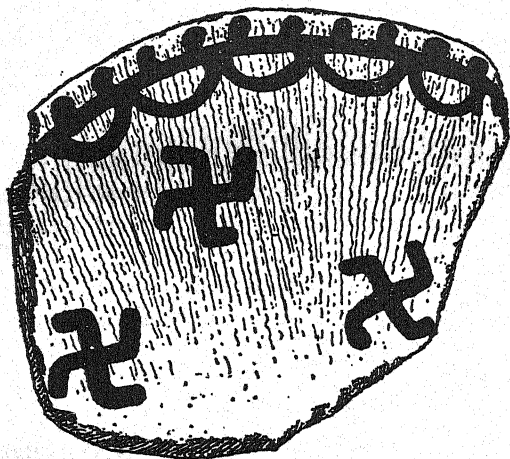


FIG. 410.—Fragment of yellow pottery with black designs from Moussian.
(See p. 272.)

at Moussian (Fig. 410). Maltese crosses, arrow heads, chequers, hearts, and other elementary units of decorative designs have also been found on the painted pottery of that remote period.

The one-horned bull (Fig. 229) is a strangely persistent figure in Mesopotamian art; possibly it is the origin of the mythical unicorn. On the surface of the walls of the sacred Ishtar road at Nineveh great figures of finely coloured glazed brick lions and unicorn bulls are seen chasing one another in a long procession. In the days of Nebuchadnezzar the

traditions about the rivalry of the lion and the bull were already several thousand years old. Is it too great a stretch of imagination to suppose that perhaps these traditions have lasted another twenty-five centuries and are represented by our old nursery rhyme about the lion and the unicorn running round the town?

Another instance of the persistence of ancient designs is found in the modern Mecklenburg flag, for it contains a head wearing a bison-horned crown which is almost exactly like that of Naram Sin! (Fig. 253). Of course this design may have had an independent origin, for bisons existed in North Europe until comparatively recent times. The last of them are said to have been exterminated in Lithuania during the Great War

41, p. 288. Prof. Ed. Meyer has published a monograph, *Sumerier und Semiten in Babylonien*, 1906, on this subject. The artistic side of the question has received much more attention from him than it used to receive from the older historians. Their ignorance of the collateral proofs of the sequence of events in ancient times is partly due to the difficulty of obtaining good photographs or drawings of a sufficient number of examples, but even now some of the older men talk contemptuously of artistic evidence, and often make ridiculous mistakes when they happen to allude to it

42, p. 288. Many fragments of pottery have been found with a hole pierced for suspension so that they could be used as amulets. This cannot easily be confused with one made for rivets, or bands, with which to mend the broken vases. These pathetic signs of the value attached to crockery in ancient days are not at all uncommon.

43, p. 298. See *Meroe*, by Garstang, Sayce and Crowfoot, 1912, p. 27. In Plate xiv. there is a photograph of an incised drawing of a full-face sun-god delivering prisoners to a profile Ethiopian king. It was found on a granite rock at

Gebel Geili, ninety miles east of Khartum. Its date is not yet ascertained, but it is supposed to be shortly before or shortly after the beginning of the Christian era. At that time there was apparently a struggle between the Egyptian profile manner and the local full-face system of representing figures. It will be very interesting if more examples can be found showing the progress of the struggle down to modern times. A curious instance of the duality of style in those days is seen on a stele (*Meroe*, Pl. xxv.) having on one side a relief of a goddess in the stilted Egyptian style, with only one breast (see Fig. 182), while on the other side a similar goddess is depicted with two breasts in a naturalistic style, probably the result of Greek influences.

44, p. 312. It may be due to other causes, but it is certainly remarkable that the Assyrians should have represented the Gilgames lion as quite small and incapable of offering much resistance. The keen delight in struggling with a noble foe does not seem to have been natural to them any more than it was to the Egyptian Pharaohs. When sufficient material evidence has been accumulated to enable us to form a better conception of the ideals and the economic conditions of the ruling races in former times, many chapters of ancient history will have to be rewritten, and some of the deeds described will lose their halo of false glory.

Our imaginations have been overfed with descriptions of the delights of conquest and the benefits of plunder. Historians seem to pay no heed to the sufferings of the mangled cattle; they would only have us listen to the grand roaring of the ravening animals, the noble lions of their romantic pages. But in truth the human beasts of prey are more often like wolves and jackals skulking around to snatch weak helpless victims from unguarded or decrepit flocks. I do not wish to disparage those predatory chieftains, not even when they rob by the power of the purse instead of by the power of the sword. Probably it is necessary for the welfare of the world that there should be beasts of prey. After

all, it is chiefly a matter of proportion. It might not be good for the sheep if there were too few wolves, and it would indeed be bad for the wolves if there were too few sheep. Certain classes of men can no more be expected to assist in producing wealth instead of stealing it than wolves can be expected to eat grass.

45, p. 318. I do not mean that all those low reliefs are coarse and brutal. Very fine results were achieved by Assyrian sculptors in their low-relief representations of lions and horses. The lion, certainly, was not such a magnificent animal as the African species, but it seems to have been a fierce and active fighter when brought to bay. Artists, evidently, had many opportunities of storing their minds with vivid impressions of its appearance under many varied conditions, and probably they were keenly interested in the slaughter of animals which at one time were so abundant as to be a serious danger to the inhabitants of the country.

Among those crowded sculptured tablets inordinately glorifying the slaughter both of man and beast, we find one strange exception—one of the earliest expressions of a sense of pity for a creature in distress. In a hunting-scene where great mastiffs are chasing the wild onager (Fig. 411), a mare seems to have slackened her pace, and she turns her head sadly towards her foal galloping frantically in a vain effort to escape from a fierce pursuing hound. That dark carnival of sordid brutality which constitutes the history of the Assyrian empire is illuminated by a solitary spark of tenderness and sympathy—

“Fair as a star when only one is shining in the sky.”

More examples may be discovered when the great gaps in our knowledge of that period have been somewhat reduced in number and in size; but even if no more are found, it is a joy to see that unnamed sculptor's tentative expression of an idea which still has all too little influence on the actions of mankind.

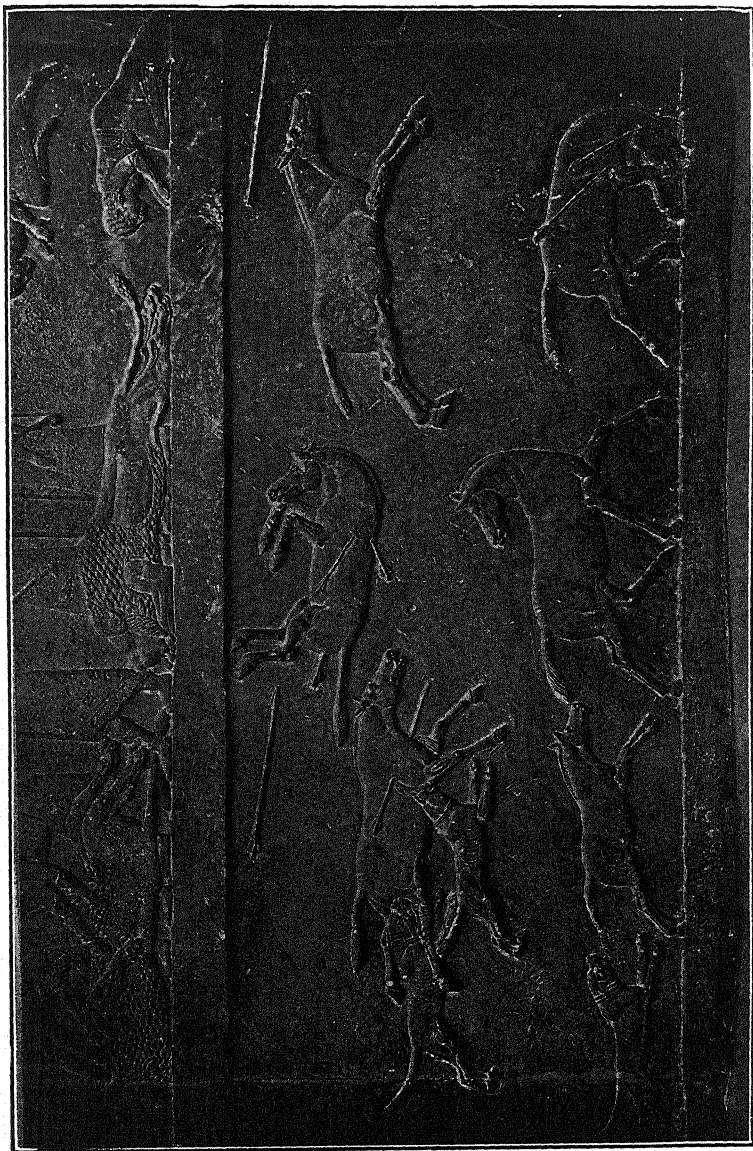
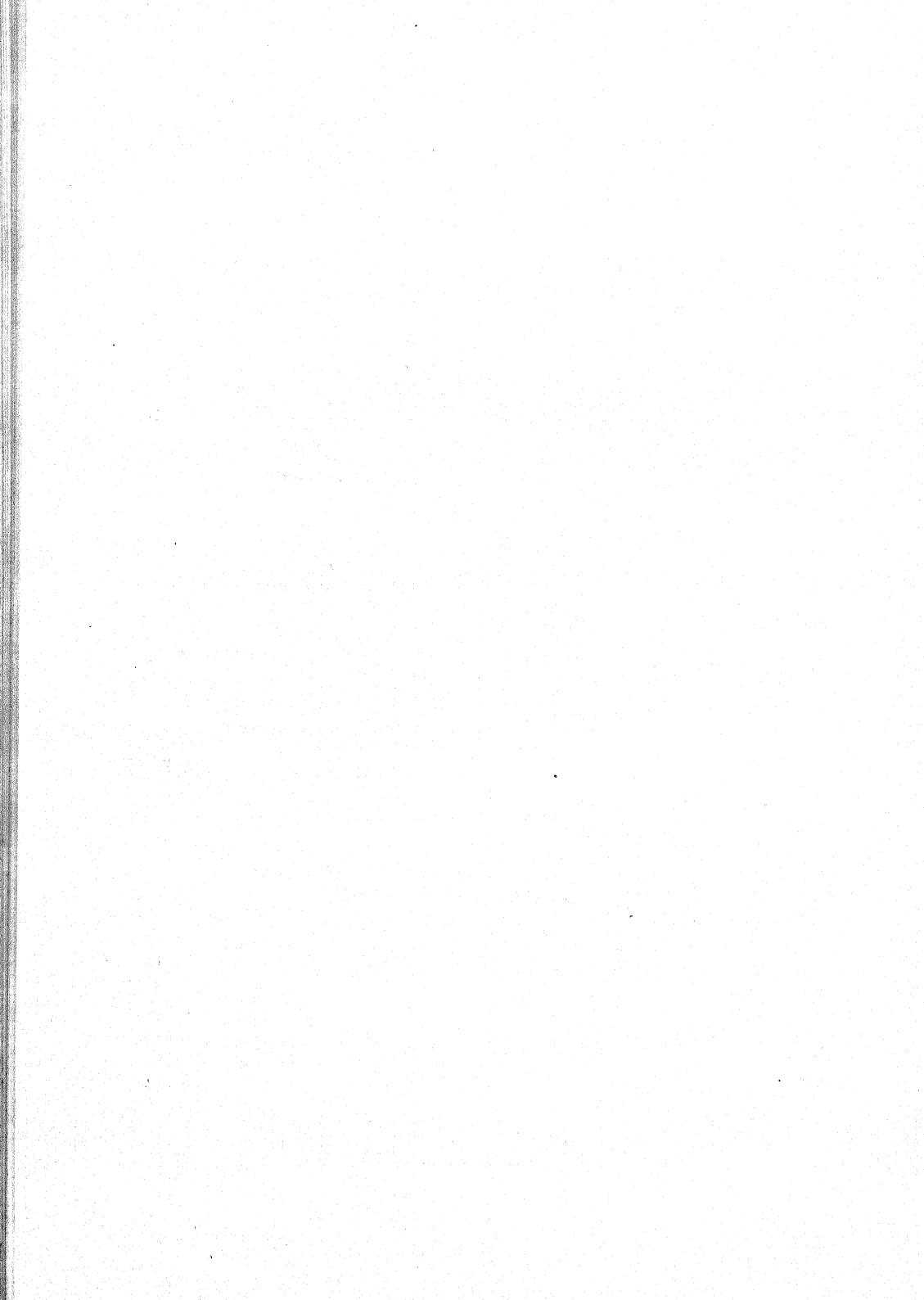


FIG. 411.—Low relief from the Nineveh palace of Ashur-bani-pal, the king who, about 660 B.C., "by the will of Ashur and Ishtar, took the great city of Susa and for a month and a day swept the country of Elam." The modelling of the wild asses (Onagers) is the greatest triumph of Assyrian art; possibly, however, it was not the work of native Assyrians, but of foreign artists from Asia Minor, where the Greeks had long been settled and had probably inherited some of the old traditions of the Cretans and the Chaldeans. British Museum. About four feet in length.



45a, p. 325. Instead of instituting comparisons between the two sexes, and attempting to prove woman's equality with man, or even her superiority, it would be better to acknowledge that all wide differentiation of the sexes is an attribute only of the higher animals. Broadly speaking, the higher the class of animal the greater is the difference between the male and the female both in appearance and in habits. It is even noticeable in the different races of humanity, the female having as a rule less resemblance to the male type in civilised nations than among savages. The trouble is that under all frankly competitive systems, whether martial or commercial, woman cannot develop along her own lines, but is continually worsted in her rivalry with the physically more active and concentrative sex.

46, p. 326. In Chaldea we have strange evidence of this reluctance among the rich to accept the duties of motherhood. As an unmarried woman had no good social status, associations were formed, under the guise of religion, to allow women to be nominally married and yet retain their virginity. They ruled their husbands' houses, and provided them with concubines whose children were considered as legitimate. Thus into the ruling classes a foreign and perhaps inferior element was introduced which probably contributed to their downfall.

Among the males in highly civilised communities the desire or the necessity for keeping their wealth intact has generally resulted in late marriages or few children. The natural consequence is the elimination of the sexually fittest from the upper classes, since the progeny of those who have many children gradually sink in the social scale. There is a survival of those who are fittest—to conserve property. History does not seem to show that they were fit for many other purposes, therefore in times of stress they were unable to defend their hoarded wealth.

47, p. 328. Minos is a strangely unaccountable figure in the ancient legends; a self-made man, cruelly exacting

human sacrifices, and yet so famed for justice that he was made the judge of all the dead in Hades. It is still more difficult to imagine what could have been the origin of the story about his son. The Greeks were very practical and observant people, and possibly this myth records their recognition of the fact that the sons of self-made men are often so objectionable, having their father's failings but not his better qualities. It is one of the many evil consequences of excessive wealth, and yet men still pretend that they seek it for the benefit of their children. The evil done to the community by excessive wealth was certainly recognised by the Greeks, although their attempts to mitigate it were not very successful. Some day the civilised nations of the world will realise that just as slavery was more demoralising to the free than to the slaves, so unequally divided wealth is more injurious to the rich than to the poor.

48, p. 333. In *The Works of Man*, by L. March Phillips (1911), there are some very suggestive passages on this subject. He has shown the far-reaching effects of environment, strengthening his arguments by a careful analysis of the artistic work of the Egyptians. It would be much more satisfactory if writers on art would generally adopt this plan instead of merely expressing their own admiration of the art products they discuss. Vague assertions about the beauty or grandeur of such works are of little value when unsupported by definite reasons and accurate comparisons.

49, p. 349. The powers of Europe are continually becoming more and more dependent on their financial resources. To maintain their strength they must have command of money, and yet money itself is becoming a mere artificial device—a paper convention—a matter of book-keeping. For what is money but a claim? The best definition of it is "A debt due by the community." In old days wealth consisted in actual goods—weapons, houses, cattle, corn—things that could be utilised although they

could not be easily transferred. Then wealth became reckoned in gold, a handy form for transference, and also utilisable as long as men and women desired to use it, and there was not enough to satisfy them all. Now gold, being practically indestructible, has accumulated enormously, while the uses for it have diminished, thus its value or "ratio of exchange" has sunk. We can no longer buy a sheep for eight pence as in the good old days. Still it is a convenient intermediary for transferring wealth, and it will remain so as long as men cling to the superstition that it is really valuable even apart from any actual use that can be made of it.

For two thousand years or so gold and silver were almost the only means of transferring wealth to any distance, and they became accepted as standards of value all over the world. Being thus accepted they soon obtained legal sanction, and men bound themselves by law to pay their debts in gold or silver. Then silver became too plentiful; it lost its legal status and dropped to half its value. Some day the same disaster will befall the owners of red gold. Meanwhile its value is being undermined by cheques and other forms of paper money, so much more suited to the requirements of commerce. During the last hundred years trade has experienced greater changes than in all the previous twenty centuries. Its systems of transference have also been revolutionised, but its method of estimating value is legally still the same. A man or a nation is bound to pay or to receive certain sums of gold, no matter whether they still represent the same value that they had when the contract was first made. Thus England has lost a large percentage of the capital advanced by her to other nations, although nominally the amount is still the same. Germany has lost many millions by storing gold in her war chest at Spandau, for, besides losing the interest on it, she cannot buy as much with it as she could have bought forty years ago. The further fall in the value of gold will be disastrous for all the creditor nations, sweeping away their painful savings, and depriving them of a large part of that artificial power

which they had acquired by their money claims, those "debts due by the community of nations."

Many years ago I wrote an article for the *Contemporary Review* forecasting the rise in prices and the disasters it might cause, but Sir Percy (then Mr.) Bunting, after hesitating some time and consulting Lord Avebury and Lord Welby, came to the conclusion that there was not much fear of any great trouble, and that anyhow the public was not interested in the question of the variation in the value of gold. I still think that it will be one of the most potent weapons in the warfare of the future, a warfare that will become more and more purely commercial, just as the tyranny of the future will be the tyranny of the money bags, which Carlyle prophesied would be infinitely more sordid and insidious than any tyranny the world had ever known.

50, p. 355. A portion of a seal impression found at Knossos (Fig. 412) roughly indicates a boat with rowers, but the horse is so much larger than the boat that it was evidently considered as the most important part of the design. Ships are a difficult subject for an artist who has no practical knowledge of them; even in modern drawings the details are very often incorrect. I cannot help thinking that the Cretans did frequently attempt to depict them; some day we may find evidence of such attempts either in Crete or in the Ægean Islands. Most of the drawings hitherto discovered date from the period when the hardy sailors "of the western isles" had firmly established the prosperity of their country. The results of their success seem to have then been appropriated by a class to whom the joys and perils of a sailor's life were utterly unknown, and therefore not represented in their art.

Do we not find a rather similar state of affairs in Great Britain at the present day? To what extent do ships enter into the mental picture of our own lives? How much do we know or care about our sailors? A man may live all his life in London without ever realising that it is the

greatest seaport in the world, and without ever seeing an ocean-going ship or sailor.

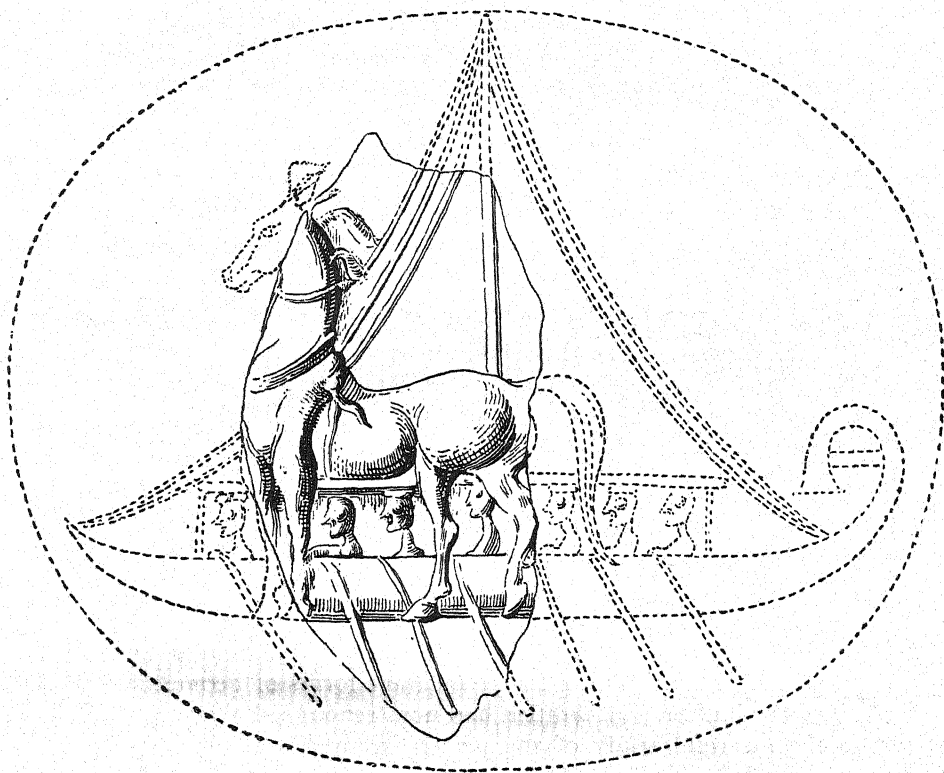


FIG. 412.—Seal impression from Knossos. Scale 4 : 1. Between this representation of a horse and those in the caves of France there is a strange gap, for not a single drawing or carving of a horse has yet been found among the relics of the whole period (of still undetermined length) separating them. Before the discovery of this seal and of the cave drawings the eighteenth-dynasty Egyptian reliefs offered the earliest known representations of horses. They are very conventional and evidently derived from other sources still unknown. They are seldom as good as this Cretan horse, although indeed its designer drew the fore and the hind legs from two different points of view, a mistake often made by his palæolithic predecessors.

51, p. 361. A frame may be noticed scratched round one of the vases ; apparently some spoliator intended to cut out this portion of the fresco. It is sometimes difficult to decide whether to blame such men for the destruction they have wrought, or to be grateful to them for saving some small samples from perishing by neglect. I fear that the former verdict will be given by posterity. The paintings would not have perished if the tombs had either not been opened or had been properly covered up afterwards. Too often it was the greed of acquisition which prompted their efforts ; in satisfying that greed they destroyed far more than they preserved. For an account of such destruction by Champollion, see W. H. Yates' *Egypt* (1843), vol. ii. p. 422.

52, p. 365. The Ptolemaic system can hardly have been thought of at that time, but the Egyptian and Chaldean astronomers started with the assumption that the heavenly bodies revolved around and above their world.

53, p. 367. To those who believe that geometric decorative designs are generally if not always evolved by degeneration from the shapes of natural objects, it is very puzzling to find a special and well-developed geometric style suddenly appearing in Crete, apparently without any forerunners. A number of experts still hold that natural objects had no influence in determining the elementary forms of geometric designs, but M. Ed. Pottier has now renounced that view after a careful study of the pottery from Elam. He has given a long account of his investigations in the *Mem. de la Délégation en Perse*, vol. xiii. pp. 27-103. There has been some controversy about the derivation of the rosette, Good-year ascribing it to the seed vessel of the lotus, and Riegl to the flower seen from above. Irregular rosettes have already been noticed in very ancient work (Figs. 134 and 135), but Fig. 310 shows the earliest known instance of the form so common in later times in Egypt, Assyria, and Greece. A rather similar design is found on the fillet binding the hair of Nefert (Fig. 166), but it really is a round patch with white

lines crossing it, possibly representing the stitched lines on appliqué work.

There are but few indications of the Cretan designs having originated in Egypt; they have much affinity with the ancient Elamite work. Further exploration of the interesting districts will lead to very interesting discoveries, showing the course of the evolution of the Kamares pottery. The excavations made in Southern Russia by E. von Stern and other archæologists will have an important bearing on this question, but as most of their reports are written in Russian, and are also not easily obtainable, we shall have to wait until someone will devote himself to that special branch, and will present his results in a condensed and intelligible form.

54, p. 378. This whole design has a remarkable resemblance to a portion of a drawing of the Hathor cow looking out from a mountain above a papyrus grove (Fig. 413). That "full face" representation resembling a sun-flower is very uncommon, and does not seem to be quite natural; it would be very instructive if we could find several other instances of this variation either in Egypt or Crete. The papyrus flower is really a feathery tuft, rather like the tufts of some of our marsh reeds, or of the Indian grass of our gardens. In very early times (fifth dynasty; see Note 57) it had become so stylised that it cannot easily be distinguished from the stylised lotus, and has therefore given rise to much controversy.

The slanting lines in the papyrus picture represent the mountain; they are quite different from the conventional zigzag lines drawn by the Egyptians to indicate water; possibly the zigzag lines on the vase were also copied from this mountain picture.

55, p. 381. Hundreds of plain steatite vases of very excellent design have been found in Crete without any trace of gold leaf on them. Gliding seems generally to mark the beginning of a decadent period, when wealth and ostentation

extend their baneful sway. The Greek potters adopted the same device in the fourth century when their art had passed its prime.

56, p. 387. Tattooing has recently come into fashion among certain members of the male sex, but criminologists say that this is due to an atavistic tendency. It has always



FIG. 413.—Tracing of part of a painting in the papyrus of Ani (No. 37), showing the goddess Hat-hor looking out from her mountain to receive a deceased votary on his way to the land of the dead. This drawing is of about the same date as the Cretan vase—fourteenth or fifteenth century. Half actual size.

been popular among sailors, and they also show a fondness for wearing earrings, yet no one would accuse sailors of being womanish in the bad sense of the word. That peculiar inclination may be due to their having a larger share of the *etwas weibliche* which Goethe considered such a necessary ingredient in a man's character. A seafaring life certainly seems to produce those qualities, neatness, patience, tenderness for the weak and suffering, which are justly

thought to be generally characteristic of the female sex. It is rather odd that soldiers, who are not supposed to have those qualities so well developed, should share with females a fondness for feathers and for brightly-coloured clothing. Why this should be so would be an interesting study for a psychologist.

57, p. 391. The hunting cat and the papyrus flower seem to show Egyptian influence, but this may have been

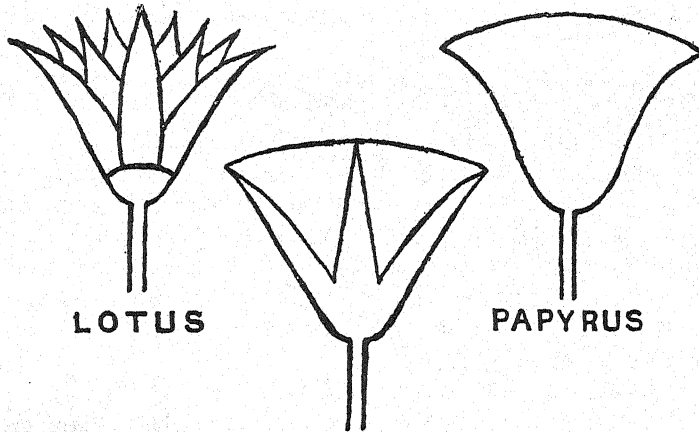


FIG. 414.—The middle figure seems as if it might well be used for either lotus or papyrus. The papyrus often had a number of dots at the top. See Fig. 340-*a*. For other shapes of the lotus flower see Fig. 181.

exercised through the medium of drawings on papyrus sheets, which, being portable, were probably often brought to Crete. It is quite possible that the real origin of these crafts will be traced to Chaldea, where metal working and enamelling had flourished for ages. The discovery of Maltese crosses on the earliest specimens of Elamite pottery might seem to show that the apparently un-Egyptian cross on the golden head-dress from Dahshur (Fig. 339) was derived from an Eastern source. It is formed of four lotus

or papyrus blooms arranged in the wheel form so common on the early Elamite ware (Fig. 206).

There is such a lack of purely decorative designs in Egyptian work previous to the eighteenth dynasty that it is unsatisfactory to speculate on the origin of the few specimens hitherto unearthed. An instance of the slight results achieved by such speculations is seen in the discussions of Professor Goodyear and Dr. Riegl (*Stilfragen*, p. 49) about these lotus and papyrus flowers. They thought it could be definitely proved that the bell-shaped outline (Fig. 414) was used only for the lotus bloom, but Egyptologists still call it papyrus. The reopening of Ptah-hotep's tomb in 1895 was expected to throw some light on the subject. It revealed a painting of men carrying bundles of bell-topped stalks, which Mr. Griffiths in his report (*Egyptian Research Account*, 1898) calls papyrus stems for making boats, but the two men, who are actually gathering the stalks, are apparently pulling them up from a pool full of unmistakable lotus. Plant outlines are so easily stylised and confused that until numerous and definite examples are found it seems impossible to decide which flower the artist wished to represent.

58, p. 392. The discovery by American archæologists of an iron spearhead in twelfth-dynasty (2000 B.C.) deposits throws back the beginning of the iron age to a much more remote period than has hitherto been generally assigned to it. (See *Buhen*, published by the University Museum, Philadelphia, 1911, Pl. 88.) It is a large, well-formed weapon of very modern appearance. There is not, however, much scope in a spearhead for variety of shape; I have bought a very similar one from a native of Assouan

The iron ore of Central Africa seems to be more easily reduced to a metallic form than the ore of Europe, so that iron may have been used in the southern parts of Egypt when it was still unknown elsewhere, except in those small quantities, which are occasionally found native or fall as meteorites. Its origin being so mysterious, the metal was

regarded by the northern nations as something uncanny or perhaps holy. Even now one feels a thrill in handling a piece of meteoric iron which has reached this world after passing through those boundless realms of space so inaccessible to us even in imagination.

59, p. 396. The migrations of the Hottentots and Kaffirs from Central Africa to the southern districts seem to have resembled those of the European tribes into Greece and Asia. The firstcomers fraternised with the Bushmen; there was plenty of room for both races. Then more Northerners came and had to fight their way against their own kindred as well as against the aborigines. Stow, in his *Native Races of South Africa*, gives a sketch map of these wanderings, showing the complicated eddies and cross-currents formed by the general stream towards new territory.

60, p. 402. "When Greek art was developed it became a truer record of the natural and popular belief than the literature. For the painter, and still more the sculptor, was usually the servant of the State, executing State commissions; he could not then break away from tradition, but must embody in his work the popular view about the divinity, however he might refine and idealise" (*Cults of the Greek States*, L. R. Farnell, 1896, vol. i. p. 10).

61, p. 412. The strangely persistent influence of soil and climate on invading races, modifying them continually until they reproduce the original type, has been noticed in many lands, even in the United States of America. The white races there are said to be beginning to conform to the hatchet-faced type of the Red Indian. It suggests a curious subject for speculation. Perhaps in the commercial warfare of the future we shall see a revival of the methods of the redskins, and from the jungle of their skyscrapers the financial chiefs of "predatory wealth" will issue forth to torture and to scalp the world.

61a, p. 429. When Praxiteles was asked which of his own statues he liked best, he is said to have replied, "those which the painter Nicias has coloured for me."

62, p. 438. Some of the fine Hittite slabs recently discovered at Carchemish show men with slender waists similar to the Cretan. The results of the British explorations there were published in 1914 and 1921. Slender, girdled waists are also seen on Hittite seals.

63, p. 447. The authors do not state whether this date is based on the long or the short chronology, or whether it was computed independently by estimating the length of time required for the formation of such thick deposits.

64, p. 456. A lady tells me that one of her school-fellows used always to draw people with triangular bodies. When asked for a reason the little girl replied: "My figures are dressed; yours look as if they had not any clothes."

65, p. 469. In Roscher's *Lexicon der Griechischen und Römischen Mythologie*, vol. i. p. 2135, Hercules is said to have been given a spear or sword occasionally, but they were dropped in the fifth century. Even when he wears a sword he is seldom shown as using it. A critical classification of all the various representations of Hercules might give interesting results.

66, p. 472. These "traits réservés" are chiefly seen in the ware made at Rhodes, perhaps the stepping-stone between Chaldea and Greece. M. Pottier says that it is a technique derived from large-scale painting, such as that on the terra-cotta slabs from Caere now in the British Museum. He thinks that the method was imported from Asia Minor.

67, p. 481. For an account of the brushes used see Furtwängler and Reichhold's *Griechische Vasenmalerei*, vol. i. pp. 19-24. The Greeks obtained perfection of their outline work by carefully making corrections on the still moist clay; they do not seem to have practised certain strokes until they

could make them without a flaw ; they preferred to vary and improve their drawings. The Egyptians had perhaps a better mastery in the mere manual execution of such work, but it was obtained by continual repetition of the same sort of stroke. Thus their stereotyped system encouraged art in one way, but killed it in another

M. Van Gennep has remarked that the Kabyle potters get their brushes from the clotted clumps of hair found on the muddied skins or tails of their cattle. Perhaps the cave-men's brushes were made in the same way.



FIG. 415.—Painting on an Ionian amphora. Similarly designed animals are found on Mycenaean gems. (*J. H. S.*, 1901, p. 159.) On the lion gate at Mycenæ each animal had a head, but, as Mr. Murray pointed out, the effect on the beholder must have been much more impressive if it gave the idea of one animal facing him and guarding the gate than if it was only considered as two animals facing one another.

67*a*, p. 488. The plumes on the helmets of full-face figures were always drawn double. According to Mr. G. Murray's theory, this would indicate a deliberate attempt to show both sides of the plume, but since his time the idea of deliberate intention has been rather supplanted by the view that these representations are a reproduction of the ordinary memory picture. The plume would seldom be seen absolutely "end on." As the warrior approached, the spectator would see sometimes one side of the plume and sometimes the other. The double representation would therefore seem

quite natural, while an absolutely front view would not be recognised at all.

The representations of animals with two bodies and only one head (Fig. 415) would seem to afford a much better proof of Mr. Murray's theory.



FIG. 416.—Terra-cotta tablet found at Angelona, in Laconia, in a hillock containing various other vestiges of a sacred enclosure. It is thought to be sixth-century work, but it is much more crude than most of these votive offerings to deceased persons. Stone tombstones have been found in Sparta showing much better execution but a similar arrangement of the figures. About one-third actual size.

68, p. 492. An exception to this general rule in early drawings is found on a vase by Duris representing a procession (Hartwig's *Meisterschalen*, Pl. 45). Several of the figures are given full face, and some are turning their heads to look at the men behind them.

That strange Chaldean fancy for depicting profile sitting

figures with a full face seems to have an echo or a survival in those crude Hero tablets (Fig. 416) of Greece. The Hero enclosures and monuments appear to have their roots in remote antiquity, and may possibly be connected with traditions derived from Asia Minor and Babylonia.

69, p. 495. Lange mentions a sarcophagus from Kameiros, Rhodes, now in the Greek and Roman department of the British Museum, as showing the earliest example of an accurately-drawn profile eye. The painting used to be considered early sixth-century work, but Mr. A. H. Smith, the Head of that Department, tells me that it is now assigned to the fifth, and is probably not any earlier than the vases with true profile eyes, *i.e.* about 460 B.C.

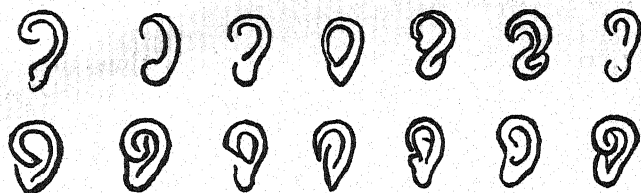


FIG. 417.—Progressive renderings of the ear. Copied by M. Pottier from various Greek vases for his *Catalogue des Vases antiques du Louvre*, III. p. 855.

Ears have not received the attention they seem to deserve from artists and archæologists. That the latter should neglect them is perhaps natural, since the ear is so frequently damaged in carved work and so frequently scamped or hidden in paintings. Fig. 417 shows the course of its development on Greek pottery.

We have already noticed the strange position and size of the ears in many of the Egyptian sculptures and drawings. It may be due to an exaggerated insistence on racial differences (the Central African Bushmen have very small ears), but I have not been able to ascertain that any accurate system of comparison and classification has yet been attempted. The anatomists' "auricular index" is of no assistance in such determinations.

70, p. 495. This seems rather a moot question as regards human faces. Only a few and very indefinite palæolithic drawings of the human full face have yet been discovered, nor do they usually occur in primitive efforts at other periods. On the other hand, children and some savages delight in full-face representations, and when the rough Roman soldiers drew pictures on the walls of conquered towns they gave full faces to their figures. These three instances may, however, be due to the "artists" having reproduced their "memory picture," not of actual people but of drawings they had seen. Some persons can call to mind a drawing or photograph of a face more readily than they can recall the appearance of the face itself. I do not know if this peculiarity is at all common

71, p. 496. Even before Diocletian's time there are occasional instances of this return to the primitive type. In the arch of Claudius (41 B.C.) there is a profile relief with a full-face eye (Brunn-Bruckmann's *Griechischer und Römischer Sculptur*, No. 403). In Mrs. A. Strong's *Roman Sculpture* (1907), Pl. 49, there is an illustration of the Trajanic frieze (about 100 A.D.) which was inserted into the arch of Constantine. It shows a well-rendered face of a Dacian, but the Roman soldier who is attacking him is in much lower relief, and has an almost full-face eye.

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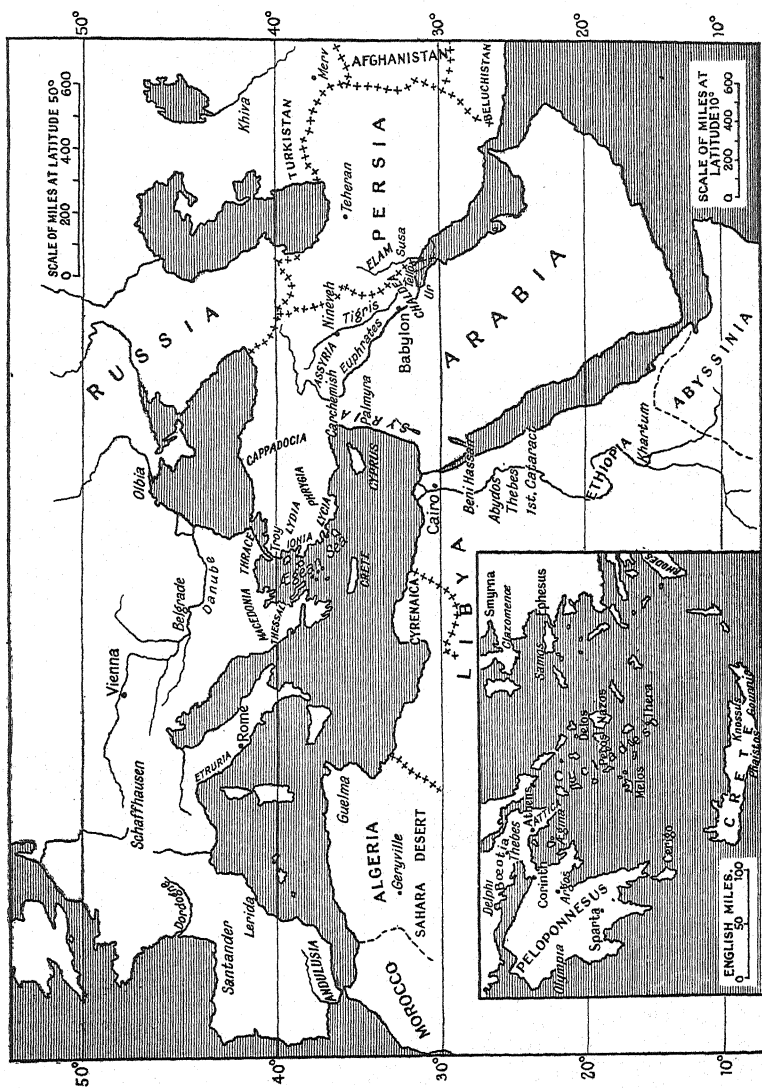
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SKETCH MAP SHOWING THE CHIEF PLACES MENTIONED IN THIS BOOK.

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